

Message One  
**Visions of God  
and  
the Unveiling of God's Purpose and the Desire of His Heart**

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 1:1, 3, 16; 8:3; 40:4;  
Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:18

**I. "The heavens were opened and I saw visions of God"—Ezek. 1:1:**

- A. The heavens were opened to Ezekiel—v. 1:
  - 1. The opening of the heavens was God's special visitation; the heavens were opened also to Jacob (Gen. 28:11-17), to Jesus (Matt. 3:16-17), to Stephen (Acts 7:56), to Peter (10:11), and to John (Rev. 4:2; 19:11).
  - 2. Ezekiel stood in the position of a priest, one who was seeking God and contacting God and who was connected to the heavens—Ezek. 1:3:
    - a. Ezekiel was carrying out his priesthood in the spirit, serving God and fellowshiping with God, so that the heavens were opened, and he saw the glorious vision of God being life to man so that He and man could be built together—vv. 4, 16; 40:1—48:35.
    - b. The heavens were opened to Ezekiel and could even come down to earth, enabling God's heavenly things to be seen by people on earth and to be fulfilled among them on earth—Rev. 1:1, 9; Gen. 28:17.
  - 3. Whenever God finds a man on earth who is one with Him and whose heart is a duplication of His heart, the heavens are opened to him—Matt. 3:16.
- B. Ezekiel saw visions of God—divine, spiritual, heavenly visions—in his spirit under an opened heaven—Ezek. 1:1; 8:3; cf. Rev. 1:10-11; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10:
  - 1. God's visions are His revelations, which enable us to see divine, spiritual, and heavenly things—Ezek. 40:4; cf. Eph. 1:17-18.
  - 2. What we present to the children of God should be visions of God, which we have seen in our spirit under the opened heavens through our contact with God—Acts 26:16-19; cf. S. S. 1:15; 7:4.
  - 3. These visions will lead to the building up of God's churches—Matt. 16:18.
  - 4. The most important matter for a person who serves the Lord is that he must see visions of God—Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:19:
    - a. In the Bible *vision* denotes an extraordinary scene; it refers to a special kind of seeing—a glorious, inward seeing—and to the spiritual scenery that we see from God—Dan. 7:1, 9-10, 13-14.
    - b. In order to see a vision, we need revelation, light, and sight—Eph. 1:17-18.
    - c. Visions of God govern us, restrict us, control us, preserve us, revolutionize us, give us the boldness to go on, and keep us in the genuine oneness—Prov. 29:18a.
    - d. Under the visions from God we are directed toward God's destination, and our life is controlled according to God's economy—Phil. 3:13-14; 1 Tim. 1:4.
  - 5. We need the kind of prayer that brings us into a trance and that brings a heavenly vision to us—Acts 10:9-16; 22:17-21:

- a. A trance means that we have been brought out of our self; we may be imprisoned in the self, but we need to pray ourselves out of that imprisonment.
  - b. To be in a trance is to be out of our self, and in that trance we receive visions from God—10:10-11; 22:17-18.
- C. God wanted Ezekiel not only to behold with his eyes but also to hear with his ears; hence, He gave him His words along with His visions—Ezek. 40:4:
- 1. God's word to Ezekiel was not an ordinary word but an express word, a special word—1:3.
  - 2. God's words are His explanations of His visions.
  - 3. We need to have an express word from the Lord—John 6:63; S. S. 8:13:
    - a. God wants to give us special, fresh, and vivid words that convey His divine visions—1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 4:11a.
    - b. We should ask God for words that will enable us to understand the visions, and we need the words that will enable us to proclaim and explain what we have seen—Ezek. 3:1-4.
- D. God's hand always follows His speaking; thus, the hand of Jehovah was upon Ezekiel—1:3:
- 1. God will come in to do what He says and to work according to His speaking—v. 3; Psa. 33:9.
  - 2. God's hand upon man is for leading and directing man and for causing man to take action—cf. 1 Kings 18:46; Dan. 11:32b; John 7:6, 8; 2 Cor. 5:14-15.
  - 3. May we all have an opened heaven, see God's visions, receive God's words, and have God's leading and directing hand upon us to meet God's need.

**II. Ezekiel 1 unveils to us the desire of God's heart and the purpose that He wants to accomplish—vv. 4-5, 26; Eph. 1:5, 9; 3:10; Phil. 2:13; Gen. 1:26:**

- A. The biblical term that refers to the desire of God's heart is *the good pleasure of His will*; the good pleasure of God's will is the desire of God's heart—Eph. 1:5:
- 1. The Triune God's economy was made according to His good pleasure, and His good pleasure comes out of His heart's desire—vv. 9-10; 3:9-11.
  - 2. Out of the desire of God's heart, His good pleasure, is God's purpose, and out of this purpose is His economy—1 Tim. 1:4.
  - 3. Our inward joy is an indication that God is operating in us for His good pleasure and that we are living and walking according to His good pleasure, the desire of His heart—Phil. 2:13.
- B. Ezekiel 1 unveils God's desire to be expressed in His Son—Heb. 1:3.
- C. The One signified by the glowing electrum, the Lamb-God, dwells within us as a priceless treasure for His expression—2 Cor. 4:7.
- D. The four faces of the four living creatures signify the complete and adequate expression of Christ—Ezek. 1:5-6, 10:
- 1. The four living creatures signify a corporate entity, the corporate Christ—the corporate expression of God; when God gains such a corporate expression, His purpose will be accomplished—1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 3:10-11.
  - 2. The vision in Ezekiel 1 shows us that we need to be corporate and that we need to be in coordination—vv. 4-5, 12.

- E. “Upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man”—v. 26:
1. The One on the throne looks like a man, yet with Him is the likeness of the glory of Jehovah (v. 28), indicating that the One sitting on the throne is both God and man; this is Jesus Christ, the God-man, the mingling of God and man.
  2. As revealed in the Bible, God’s mysterious intention in His relationship with man is to mingle Himself with man and thereby to become the same as man and make man the same as He is in life, in nature, and in expression but not in the Godhead—John 1:12-14; 1 John 3:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:29.
  3. The One on the throne and the four living creatures both have the appearance of a man, indicating that the four living creatures on earth are the expression of the One on the throne; this is the manifestation of God in humanity—Ezek. 1:5, 26; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.
- F. The Bible as a whole, and the book of Ezekiel as a miniature of the Bible, reveal that God’s eternal intention is to dispense Himself into His chosen people, making them the same as He is in His life, His nature, and His image but not in the Godhead—Eph. 3:15-16:
1. God’s goal is that His redeemed and regenerated people into whom He is working Himself in Christ will be mingled with Him as one entity and be built together in Him to be His eternal habitation, the New Jerusalem—John 14:20; Eph. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 6:17; 12:12; Rev. 21:2, 10-11.
  2. This is the central point of the revelation of the Bible and also of the visions presented in the book of Ezekiel—Eph. 1:17-23; 3:15-21; Rev. 21:2, 10-11.