

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

In Message 1 we are considering **visions of God** and the **unveiling of God's purpose and the desire of His heart**. Hence, our first point is a simple quotation: *"The heavens were opened and I saw visions of God"* (Ezek. 1:1). Certain things that we need to present in this message are foundational in the sense that they open the way for us to actually begin to see the visions. To receive revelations of spiritual, divine, and heavenly things requires **an opened heaven**. We need to become, by the Lord's organic salvation, persons of an opened heaven with a being **unconditionally** opened to the Lord, who are exercised to be one with Him, to seek Him, and to contact Him. The basic requirement is to be open. Ezekiel was such a person. He was thirty years old, the starting age of a functioning priest, indicating that a measure of maturity is involved with seeing these visions and that, although the opening of the heavens and the giving of the visions altogether rest with God, there is a human side.

If there are no persons on the earth who have the characteristics of Ezekiel, the heavens will remain shut. The Lord went to China in the early twentieth century because He had some Ezekiels there. As far as we are aware, at that time He could not and did not open the heavens and show visions of God to anyone in Europe or in North America. God is not arbitrary. Yes, He is sovereign and decides when to open the heavens and what to reveal, but **where are the right persons**? In the Lord's recovery today we should aspire to be such persons, asking the Lord to make us those who are open to Him. May we all be able to say, *"Lord, I am willing to see whatever You want to show me. I am willing to hear anything You want to speak to me. I am willing for You to touch anything in my being and any aspect of my life. On my part I am open to You, and I exercise to contact You and be one spirit with You. I pray that Your heart will be duplicated in my heart."*

Another characteristic of Ezekiel was that the Lord's heart was duplicated in his heart. There was something in Ezekiel's heart, like Samuel's and David's, that corresponded to God's heart. Whatever the Lord commanded Ezekiel to speak, he spoke. Dozens of times we are told that the word of Jehovah came to him, and he spoke. He was also made a sign. The Lord required him to engage in certain mysterious outward actions as a sign to Israel. God did not spare this prophet. When God finds a human being who is open to Him, one with Him, and not caring for himself, **God will not spare** the natural feelings of this one. Upon finding such a one, God has a channel to express His thought, feeling, heart, burden, and interest. In order for God to express Himself, God will require certain things of this one, and he will do it. For his part **Ezekiel did not spare himself**.

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)**. Please do not become introspective. Doing so will not help. Rather, come back to the spirit and simply pray, *"Lord, make me a person who is one with You. Make my heart a duplication of Your heart."* How wonderful it would be if the Lord were to gain ten thousand such brothers and sisters all over the earth, all standing before Him in the position of priests! As priests, they would be one with Him, seek Him, contact Him, open to Him, be connected to the heavens through Christ as the heavenly ladder, and have a heart that is in the process of becoming the duplication of His heart. Imagine what the Lord could speak. Perhaps to a couple in their late fifties He might say, "Why not take an early retirement and move to Germany?" To someone else who received a perfect SAT score, graduated summa cum laude from a prestigious university, and was offered a marvelous position in a doctoral program, God might say, "The next step for you is the full-time training." This is not any kind of human arrangement; rather, this is the Lord finally having a corporate response on the earth

Ezekiel 1 unveils to us the desire of God's heart and the purpose that He wants to accomplish. To **unveil indicates a revelation**. Hence, Ezekiel 1 involves **a removing of a veil**, and all that is in that chapter is an unveiling of God's heart mainly in the pictures that are presented. If we see the throne above a crystal-clear expanse and One like a man on the throne, we will realize that **there is an administration in this universe** (vv. 22, 26). The One on the throne surely has a desire. There are some among us who need to grow in life more to see "that the Most High is the Ruler over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wills" (Dan. 4:25). For example, we need to see the throne in the light of the most recent United States presidential election. The throne made a decision regarding who will be the next president; thus, we should not be like all the lawless ones, refusing to accept what the ruling heavens have decided (v. 26).

Ezekiel 1 is a **deep chapter** because it presents the manifestation of God in humanity. **We interpret the Bible by the Bible**. Thus, Brother Lee could open Ezekiel 1 in the light of the New Testament revelation focused on God's economy and God's central work, which is to work Himself into us. When we read Ezekiel in the light of the New Testament, we will see that all the signs in Ezekiel unveil the desire of God's heart, God's purpose, and God's intention.

God's visions are His revelations, which enable us to see divine, spiritual, and heavenly things. We are **not** speaking about some extraordinary psychological or physical experience; we are speaking about an **inward exercise** in which the intuition in our spirit, based upon a clear conscience and the spirit's function of fellowship, is able to receive **an unveiling** of divine things. We see an example of this when Peter said, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*". What he declared was a revelation that he had seen.

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. As we study and consider the truths in these messages, we first need to align our being, our heart and our spirit, with the Lord and pray for **visions**. In this way, as we study, we will see something. Then when we speak, others will sense that we have seen something. **It is not that we merely repeat a point of truth; we have actually seen something**. We should pray, "*Lord, show me something in every meeting...*" May we all contact God under an opened heaven.

These visions will lead to the building up of God's churches. Ezekiel's prophecy begins with the wind, the cloud, the fire, and the electrum. This is followed by the glory of God leaving the temple (8:1—11:25), which was to be destroyed. However the prophecy concludes with the recovery of Israel (33:1—39:29), with the glorious vision of God's building (40:1—44:31) as the place of the soles of His feet (43:7), and with the glory of God returning. Thus, the book of Ezekiel ends with the good land, the temple, and the city, indicating that all these visions of God have a goal—that they would operate in the being of God's people to activate them and cause them to pursue the Lord with God's building in view.

The most important matter for a person who serves the Lord is that **he must** see visions of God. The seeing of visions from God needs to become what we regard most highly. The most important matter is not whether a person is able to grasp things quickly, is eloquent in speech, or is smart and capable. The most important matter is **seeing visions** of God. May the Spirit apply this word to all those who are presently serving or who have the heart to serve in any capacity; we need to see visions of God. (*Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word: Crystallization-Study of Ezekiel (1), 11-34*)