

(Heavenly Vision) 2 - the Two Aspects of the Vision

by Stephen Kaung

The Heavenly Vision is seeing Jesus as Lord and Savior, and it is a spiritual reality that must be revealed by God's Spirit, giving us purpose and direction in life.

Duration: 1:01:08

Scripture: Acts 9:6-7, Acts 9:9-11, Acts 9:17, Acts 9:20, Acts 9:26-27

Topics: "Heavenly Vision", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having the right attitude when encountering the word of God. He uses examples from the Bible, such as Daniel and Saul, to illustrate how encountering heavenly visions can both lift a person up and bring them to their knees in humility. The speaker believes that it is God's will for every believer to have a heavenly vision like the apostle Paul, as it can transform their life and give them purpose. He also highlights the significance of the church being a witness and testimony to Jesus, using the example of Peter's vision of the white sheet coming down from heaven.

Transcript

Acts chapter nine, verse six. But rise up and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. For the men who were travelling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no one.

And Saul rose up from the earth, and his eyes being opened, he saw no one. But leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. And he was there three days without seeing, and neither ate nor drank.

And there was a certain disciple in Damascus by name Ananias. And the Lord said to him in a vision, Ananias, and he said, Behold, here am I, Lord. And the Lord said to him, Rise up and go into the street, which is called straight, and seek in the house of Judas one by name Saul.

For behold, he is of Tarsus, for behold, he is free. And the Lord said to him, Rise up and go into the street, which is called straight, and seek in the house of Judas one by name Saul. And he has seen in a vision a man by name Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he should see.

And Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many concerning this man how much evil he has done to the saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon thy name. And the Lord said to him, Go, for this man is an elect vessel to me, to bear my name before both

nations and kings and the sons of Israel.

For I will show to him how much he must suffer for my name. And Ananias went and entered into the house, and laying his hands upon him, he said, Saul, brother, the Lord has sent me, Jesus, who appeared to thee in the way in which thou comest, that thou mightest see and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were stilled, and his soul, and rising up, was baptized.

And having received food, got strength, and he was with the disciples who were in Damascus certain days. And straightway in the synagogues he preached Jesus, that he is the Son of God. And all who heard were astonished, and said, Is not this he who destroys in Jerusalem those who call upon this name? And here was come for this purpose, that he might bring them bound to the chief priest.

And all who heard were astonished, and said, Is not this he who destroys in Jerusalem those who call upon this name? We mentioned last night that it is of tremendous importance that we as God's people should see the heavenly vision. God gave the heavenly vision to the Apostle Paul. It transformed his life, and it became his testimony.

And we believe that it is the will of God, that everyone who is the Lord should see that heavenly vision that Apostle Paul saw. That this heavenly vision may give us the purpose of our Christian life. Show us the way that we should go.

Give us that power within us to press on towards the goal. Enable us to sacrifice everything for this purpose. And give us the strength to endure hardships.

In order that this heavenly vision may become our vocation. And we believe that this is the will of God. Only by seeing this heavenly vision, that will give us the strength to endure to the very end.

And it is this heavenly vision that unites us as one people. So dear brothers and sisters, it is our prayer that we are not just talking about the heavenly vision. That by the grace of God, every one of us will see this heavenly vision.

As the Apostle Paul saw on the road to Damascus. What is this heavenly vision that the Apostle Paul saw on the road to Damascus? We mentioned last night that as he was approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven shone upon him. Dear brothers and sisters, I believe this light is the Shekinah glory of God.

In that glory, he saw the righteous one. He was revealed by the Heavenly Father, that the one whom he persecuted, was not only the righteous one, but he is the Son of God. He is the heir of all things.

He, the Nazarene whom Saul persecuted, is the same one who is now at the right hand of God. Receiving all power over heaven and earth. God has highly exalted him.

God has anointed him to be the Lord of all. He is the master of everyone. Dear brothers and sisters, on the road to Damascus, in that heavenly light, Saul saw Jesus, the Son of God, the master of his life.

And to him he surrendered. And brothers and sisters, I think this is something that we must see. You know, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, probably what is of the most in our understanding, that we understand he is our Savior.

That he came into this world to save us. We receive him as our personal Savior. And thank God for that.

But brothers and sisters, do we at the same time, see that he is not only our Savior, but he is our Lord. That he is to be the Lord of our life. You know, to know him as our Savior.

It is Christ for me. But only when we see him as Lord, and we surrender our life to him, then it is we for the Lord. Brothers and sisters, this makes a great difference.

Our dear brother Watchmanee, when he was seventeen years old, he heard the gospel. He knew that Jesus is the Savior. He knew that he must receive him as his Savior.

But he had a problem. Because as a young man, he had all his future planned out. He was a brilliant person.

He could be successful in any field. So he had his future in his mind. But when he heard the gospel, on the one hand he was touched.

He knew he must receive Jesus as his Savior. But on the other hand, he knew that if he should receive Jesus as his Savior, at the same time, he must surrender his life to Jesus as his Lord. But this was something he couldn't do.

So he struggled for days, until one day in his home. When he was praying, the Lord showed him the blackness of his sin. And also the redness of the blood of the Lord Jesus.

He was so constrained by the love of Christ, that he yielded himself to Jesus as Savior and Lord. And from that time onward, Jesus is not only his Savior, praise the Lord, Jesus is his Lord. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the heavenly vision.

We need to see Jesus as our Lord. We need to be constrained by his love. And yielded ourselves completely to him.

From now on, he is our Master. Dear brothers and sisters, he is the worthy Lord. He is a Master that is worthy to be served.

And on the road to Damascus, we mentioned last night, that he saw something more. He saw that Jesus is not only the Lord, the Master. He saw that all the believers of the Lord Jesus are members of his own body.

He who touches any member of the body of Christ, touches Christ the head. Brothers and sisters, he saw a universal man, a great man. The head is in heaven, but the body filled the whole earth.

Brothers and sisters, this is the heavenly vision. Because it is not only free him from himself, but it enabled him to enter into a fellowship that is universal. And this is the essence of the heavenly vision.

It is not a teaching. It is not a doctrine. It is not something for us to just contemplate.

It is a spiritual reality. It is something God must reveal by Spirit in our spirit. We must be able to say, once I was blind, but now I see.

And this makes all the difference. It will change our life completely. And it will also give us a purpose of living.

But brothers and sisters, the vision that Saul saw on the road to Damascus is not complete. Because this vision continued on into the city of Damascus. Now, how do we know? Because you remember.

The first question that Saul asked was, Lord, who are you? I do not know you. And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecuted. It is hard for you to kick against the goal.

And immediately he realized that the one whom he persecuted is none other but the Lord himself. So he asked the second question. He said, Lord, what do you want me to do? Now, brothers and sisters, you know Saul.

He was a person. Who was strong. Energetic.

Self-confident. Independent. He was a master of his own.

He controlled his own life. He knew what he was to do. But because he met the Lord, he surrendered himself to Jesus as his Lord.

And to him this was real. How do we know it was real? Because by his second question, Lord, you are my Lord now. What do you want me to do? Probably this is the first time he asked such a question.

He was a person who always knew what to do. He was a person who direct people. But for the first time in his life, he said, Lord, what do you want me to do? I was finished.

I didn't know what to do now. I belong to you. You have to direct me.

Show me what I should do. You know, in the mind of this young man, he fully expected the Lord to tell him right away. He was a man of action.

Just tell me what to do. And I will get up and do it with all my strength for him to surrender to another man. That was something.

So he fully expected the Lord. Immediately told him what to do. Then he would get up and do it.

But to his surprise, the Lord did not tell him what to do. The Lord said, you go to Damascus. You wait there.

And you will be told what I want you to do. Dear brothers and sisters, it was a great test to this young man. He just surrendered his life to the Lord.

Now to him, life is just a relationship between him and the Lord. There should be no third person. It is between him and the Lord.

Isn't it true that very often we hear people say it is the Lord and me. I don't care about anybody else. I don't need anybody else.

All I need is the Lord. My Lord and I. This is my spiritual life. Oh, brothers and sisters, when we hear this, it sounds so spiritual.

But remember, it is pseudo-spiritual. It is false spirituality. The Lord has just shown him the body.

And if his idea is my Lord and I, no third person involved in my life. Then where is the body? In other words, on the road to Damascus, after he had just received that heavenly vision, immediately he was greatly tested. You acknowledge me as your Lord.

Now I am going to be your Lord. Not according to your idea, but according to my idea. I want you to wait.

Are you willing to wait? You know, waiting is very difficult for the flesh. Especially to a man of action. That was the most difficult thing to do.

But the Lord tested him. You saw the vision. Now are you willing to obey that vision? You just saw the body of Christ.

Are you willing to let other people involved in your life? Are you willing to have relationship Not only with the Lord, but also with other brothers and sisters. Or do you want to be independent? Brothers and sisters, you find a great test coming upon this young man. Vision will be tested.

Otherwise it would never be your vocation. So you find that the heavenly vision that Saul saw on the road was only part of that vision. There he was given a tremendous heavenly vision.

He saw the Lord in heaven. He saw the body of Christ. Universal.

Glorious. Oh, brothers and sisters, if you ever see that vision, it was so glorious. It expands yourself.

As it would take you out of yourself. And bring you into the third heaven. It is expanding tremendously.

But dear brothers and sisters, what will be the right attitude if you catch a heavenly vision? You are so lifted up in your spirit. As if you are in the third heaven. But dear brothers and sisters, what will be your right attitude every time you find the Word of God? When anyone saw a heavenly vision, when anyone saw the glory of God, yes, it lifted him up to the third heaven.

But at the same time, it always smites him to the ground. You remember Daniel? Daniel was such a perfect man. But when he saw the vision of the Lord, he said, my beauty turned into corruption.

He fell upon the ground as if dead. Brothers and sisters, thank God that heavenly vision is so glorious He lifts us out of ourselves. He lifts us to the third heaven.

But at the same time, it brought us to dust and ashes. Who are we to be given such a vision? We are unworthy. We are far from what that vision is.

It is the tremendous work of God to bring us into the reality of that vision. Brothers and sisters, the vision that Apostle Paul saw on the road to Damascus shows us all the heavenly spiritual principles. Shows us the Lord heavenly spiritual reality.

Shows us the Church the Body of Christ heavenly, spiritual, full of life full of glory. All the spiritual principles concerning Christ and the Church are in that heavenly vision. But dear brothers and sisters, spirituality is most practical.

What God has shown us of that which is spiritual and heavenly must be brought into practice on this earth. In this very life. So, brothers and sisters, you find that heavenly vision that Saul saw on the road to Damascus is only a part of it.

There is another part of that heavenly vision that he had to see in the city of Damascus. In obedience to the Lord. Saul got up from the ground.

But his eyes were blinded by the glory of God. He was a helpless person. This strong man was brought into such a pitiful, helpless situation.

He had to be led into the city. And there he was in the city for three days without eating, without drinking. He was praying.

He was waiting. And while he was praying and waiting, God in a vision appeared to a disciple in the city of Damascus. His name was Ananias.

Now, Ananias was a disciple of the Lord in the city of Damascus. Even though he was well known in the city. Because he was a very godly person.

The Jews knew about him. But he was unknown in Jerusalem. He was unknown in the world.

And moreover, even in the record of the Holy Bible, he appeared only once in chapter 9 of Acts. And then he disappeared. Brothers and sisters, here you find a little man, a small man, unknown, but thank God, known to God.

And in a vision, God appeared to him. And said, Ananias, brothers and sisters, you find the reaction of Ananias was so different from the reaction of Saul. He knew the Lord.

He was familiar with the Lord. So when the Lord said, Ananias, he said, Lord, where am I? He was ready, waiting upon the Lord. And the Lord said, now you go to the street called Straight, and in the house of a man called Judas, you will find a man called Saul.

He was of Tarsus. You go there, and open his eyes. And Ananias said, Lord, I have heard of this man.

This man was a famous man. His fame had already arrived Damascus. I heard from many what evil he had done to thy followers in Jerusalem.

And here he had the document from the high priest to come and seize upon those who are yours, and bring them to Jerusalem to be condemned. Brothers and sisters, you see, Ananias had the freedom to talk with the Lord. He didn't know what had happened on the road to Damascus.

He only knew what he had heard before. And he had the freedom to talk with the Lord. Not in a spirit of rebellion, but in a spirit of inquiry.

You ask me to go to see that person. Now I understand. He came to seize me.

Do you want me to go and offer myself to him? And let him lay his hands upon me? No, if it is your will, I am willing to do that. Show me what I should do. And the Lord said, go.

The Lord did not explain to him. Just say, you go. He is a chosen vessel of mine.

He will testify of my name before the nations, the kings, and the children of Israel. And he will suffer much for my name's sake. Without any further question.

Ananias obeyed. Thank God for Ananias. Thank God for this little man.

At the same time, when Saul was praying, he saw in a vision a man called Ananias, a stranger, coming to him, laying his hands upon him, and opening his eyes. Dear brothers and sisters, on the road to Damascus, only Saul saw the vision. Those who were with him did not see the vision.

They did not even hear the words. They were so frightened. Only Saul saw that heavenly vision.

But in the city of Damascus you find a double vision. You find Ananias receive a vision. And you find Saul receive a vision.

And these visions are one. Why is it so? Because so far as the practical side of the church is concerned, you need confirmation. True is the witness.

So dear brothers and sisters, whom does Ananias represent? Ananias represents the local church. Brothers and sisters, the church is universal. It is the body of Christ under the one head, Christ Jesus.

It fills the whole universe. The fellowship is universal. Whom the Lord receives, we receive.

This is the spiritual principle. Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus, in one spirit, we were baptized into one body. Whether Jews or Gentiles.

Whether bowmen or freemen. We are all made to drink of one spirit. Oh thank God for this universal church.

All the spiritual principles were shown in that universal church. Jesus is the Lord. The only head.

There is this body. Fellowship on the basis of life. Wonderful.

But brothers and sisters, this heavenly vision must touch the earth. This is what the church is. The church is heavenly in origin.

The church is spiritual in nature. But the church touches the earth and becomes a witness and testimony to the Lord Jesus. You remember the Apostle Peter.

While he was on the roof praying, he saw a vision. He saw a white sheet. A huge white sheet hanging on four corners coming down from heaven and touches the earth.

And in that sheet all kinds of corruples, all kinds of creeping things, and he heard a voice. Peter, rise and eat. Peter said, Lord, I have never eaten anything unclean.

And the Lord said, What the Lord has cleansed, do not consider it as unclean. Three times Peter refused. How strong was the tradition.

And then the sheet returned to him. Brothers and sisters, this is the vision of the church. It came down from heaven.

It included all of us who are sinful. Who were unclean. But thank God He has cleansed us.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile. And we shall fellowship with one another. Glorious fellowship.

Do not let any condition inhibit you. And this will eventually go back to heaven. This is what the church is.

Oh, brothers and sisters, if we only see the church universal, and we do not see the church local, if we only see that universal man, and we do not meet that little man, what will happen to us? We will be a visionary. Theoretical. It is something for us to contemplate.

But nothing is real. Nothing is practical. Thank God.

In the city of Damascus, Saul was given a vision of the church local. God brought him in touch with a local brother. Ananias, in obedience to the Lord, he went to the street straight.

He entered into the house. Dear brothers and sisters, he laid his hands upon Saul. It was not Saul who laid hands upon Ananias.

Thank God for that. If Saul laid hands on Ananias, Ananias would be finished. But God had done a marvelous work.

And he was the little man. Ananias laid hands on Saul. Brothers and sisters, what do you mean by the laying on of hands? Whether it is in the Old Testament, when the offerer laid his hands upon the sacrifice, or in the New Testament times, when the apostles laid hands on people.

Now, what does it really mean? Laying hands means identification. When you lay hands on another person, it means that you are identified with that person. Therefore the Bible says do not be hurry in laying hands.

Lest you partake of his sins. So, brothers and sisters, here you find Ananias, a member of the body of Christ in Damascus. He represents the church in Damascus.

And represents the church universal. He lays hands on Saul. Receives him into fellowship.

Into the fellowship of the body of Christ. Oh, brothers and sisters, isn't that wonderful? Two enemies who could not see each other. And now they are united in one body.

This is the work of God. Only God can do that. Praise the Lord.

And Ananias said, Saul, brother, dear brothers and sisters, can you feel how Saul felt at that moment? Me, your enemy, and you call me your brother. That must melt his heart. I, a blasphemer, a persecutor, the chief of sinners, and yet the grace of God is so tremendous.

He has made me a brother in the house of God. Oh, I believe there is nothing sweeter than the name brother. Do you want to be called reverend? And brother Sparks, what do you want to say? The word reverend in the original means terrible.

Do you want to be called terrible so and so? Or do you want to be called brother so and so? Male brother or female brother? Because we are all brothers. You know, once brother Watchman asked a brother, go and tell the brothers. So the brother asked Watchman, do you want me to tell the male brothers or the female brothers? Why is it we are all brothers? Because we receive the same life.

Is it the life of the son? We are all destined to be sons of God. The mature sons of God. To receive sonship through Christ Jesus.

Oh, brothers and sisters, why do you want to be called by another name? Why are you not satisfied by that dear sweet name brother? Thank God we are all brothers. Jesus Christ is our elder brother. God is our heavenly father.

We belong to the same family. There is no discrimination of any kind. Brother Saul, open your eyes and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Thank God when we are joined into the body of Christ. Through the body our blindness will be opened. We will begin to see.

And you know whom Saul saw first. The Bible says he saw Ananias. The first one he saw was a brother.

Oh, brothers and sisters, isn't that beautiful when you meet another brother or another female brother and you discover he is a brother in the Lord. Immediately there is a bond between you. Wonderful.

For the first time this man who hated the followers of Jesus, who considered them as impostors, who wanted to destroy them, now he saw a brother. A brother. A brother indeed.

Oh, dear brothers and sisters, when you see your brothers and sisters, whom do you see? Do you see a brother? Do you see the life of Christ in that brother? Do you see Christ in that brother? Or you look at a brother and you see Adam there. You see all his faults there instead of seeing Christ in him. Thank God.

Saul saw his brother and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. When you are in the body when you take your place in the body of Christ, then the holy ointment that is upon Aaron's head will come down to the beard and it will cover the whole body. If you live in the body you will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

This is your inheritance. And Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit. He got food and strength.

And do you know what he did? He was with the disciples in Damascus. He learned his lesson. He is not just my Lord and I. My Lord and I. And my brothers and I. So he was with the disciples.

And then he began to witness for the Lord that Jesus is truly the Son of God. Dear brothers and sisters, thank God from the very beginning of his Christian life, God has not only shown him the spiritual principle of the Church, but God has brought him into the practical side of the Church universe. And throughout his life you will find how true this is.

Even three years later, for the first time when he returned to Jerusalem, do you remember what he did? The first thing he did was to try to find the disciples, not to seize upon them and sentence them to death, but to seek fellowship. They were afraid of him. He was too famous.

Even after three years, but thank God, there was Barnabas, the Son of Consolation, who believed in him and brought him to Peter. And he went in and out with the disciples in Jerusalem. Wherever he went, he always sought out the brothers and sisters.

He not only saw the vision, he lived in the vision. So dear brothers and sisters, what is the heavenly vision? The heavenly vision includes two sides. The heavenly part and the earthly part.

Christ, the Lord, is in heaven. But Christ, the Lord, is in your earthly life. The church universal, the universal fellowship, but the church local where you join with your brothers and sisters and learn to be a member of the body of Christ.

Submit yourself to one another in the fear of Christ. We believe this is the heavenly vision. And we believe this is what the Lord wants us to see.

So may the Lord have mercy upon us. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

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