

Study Notes - Visions of God

by Walter Beuttler

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking and understanding God's visions and presence in our lives.

Scripture: Proverbs 29:18, Jeremiah 9:23, Ezekiel 1:1, Ezekiel 3:1, Matthew 10:41, Matthew 13:54, Mark 10:29, Luke 6:23, John 17:3, Hebrews 11:24

Topics: "Divine Revelation", "Prophetic Ministry"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the importance of having an open heaven, as seen through Ezekiel's vision and the need for divine revelation. The sermon delves into the significance of visions of God, the necessity of understanding, and the implications of a prophet's ministry. It emphasizes the nature of visions, the circumstances in which they occur, and the profound impact they have on individuals and their relationship with God.

Transcript

A.THE NEED OF AN OPEN HEAVEN

1. Point out the results of Ezekiel's vision as seen in:

- (1) Ezek. 1:1 - He saw (visions of God)
- (2) Ezek. 1:28 - He fell (at His feet)
- (3) Ezek. 1:28 - He heard (a voice that spoke)
- (4) Ezek. 2:1-2 - He stood (upon his feet)
- (5) Ezek. 3:3 - He ate (what he found)
- (6) Ezek. 3:15 - He sat (where they sat)
- (7) Ezek. 3:22-23 - He went (where he was sent)
- (8) Ezek. 11:24-25 - He spoke (the things that God had showed him)

2. Give the meaning of the term "vision" as used in:

(1) Dan. 2:19 - Revelation - The disclosure of facts not obtainable by the ordinary processes of acquiring knowledge

(2) Hab. 1:1 - Burden - The weight of the substance and implication of the revelation pressing upon the prophet's emotions

(3) Ezek. 11:24-25 - Message - The communication of the revelation by whatever means employed to those for whom it is intended

3. Wherein does the need for a vision lie according to:

(1) Prov. 29:18? Without it the people perish for inability to keep the law of God

(2) Hos. 4:6? God's people are destroyed for lack of the true knowledge of God

(3) I Sam. 3:1? Without it there is a scarcity of the word of God for want of a public message

(4) Hos. 12:13? It is essential for maintaining God's people in a right relationship to God

4. What tragic situation is evident from Lam. 2:9 and Ezek. 7:26? That the prophets of God are unable to find a vision from God notwithstanding their effort

B. CIRCUMSTANCES OF "VISIONS OF GOD"

1. At what time were "visions of God" experienced in:

(1) Ex. 34:1-8? In the morning (by Moses)

(2) Gen. 18:1? In the afternoon (by Abraham)

(3) Luke 24:29-31? In the evening (by two disciples)

(4) I Kings 3:5? During the night (by Solomon)

2. By whom were "visions of God" experienced in:

(1) I Sam. 3:1, 10? By a child (Samuel)

(2) Gen. 21:17? By a maid (Hagar)

(3) Dan. 5:1-6? By a king (Belshazzar)

(4) Amos 7:14-15? By a gatherer of fruit (Amos)

(5) II Kings 6:15-17? By a fearful servant (Elisha's)

(6) Num. 22:22-27? By an ass (Balaam's)

(7) Num. 22:31? By a recalcitrant prophet (Balaam)

(8) Matt. 27:19? By a politician's wife (Pilate's)

(9) Acts 9:1-5? By a persecutor (Saul)

(10) Acts 9:10-16? By a disciple (Ananias)

3. In what place were "visions of God" experienced in:

(1) Acts 7:30-34? In the wilderness

(2) Acts 9:3-4? On a public highway

(3) Acts 10:9-16? On a house top

(4) Acts 12:1-11? In prison

(5) Dan. 4:4-5? In a king's palace

(6) Matt. 17:1-6? On a mountain

(7) I Kings 19:9-13? In a cave

(8) Gen. 28:10-17? On a stone heap

(9) Judges 6:11-12? Under an oak tree

(10) Luke 1:8-21? In a place of worship

4. In what circumstances were "visions of God" experienced in:

(1) Luke 1:8-11? While performing a religious duty

(2) I Kings 19:19-21? While performing a mundane duty

(3) Gen. 32:1, 24-32? On a journey

(4) Num. 12:1-9? After incurring the Lord's anger

(5) II Kings 20:1-6? During a time of sickness

(6) Matt. 2:12-13? In a time of danger

(7) Acts 13:1-2? While ministering unto the Lord

(8) Acts 27:20-24? In a hopeless situation

(9) Gen. 22:9-13? In a time of testing

(10) I Kings 19:1-8? During a time of discouragement

C. NATURE OF "VISIONS OF GOD"

1. Point out the specific nature of "visions of God" from:

(1) Isa. 6:1 - A revelation OF God

(2) II Kings 6:17 - A revelation FROM God

(3) Gen. 18:33 - A conversation WITH God

(4) II Sam. 7:4-5 - A communication FROM God

(5) Deut. 29:29 - Insight into the secrets of God

2. Show that God does reveal secrets as seen in:

(1) Dan. 2:28 - "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets"

(2) Dan. 2:22 - "He revealeth the deep and secret things"

(3) Prov. 3:32 - "His secret is with the righteous"

(4) Psa. 25:14 - "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him"

(5) Amos 3:7 - "He revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets"

3. What is evident from Deut. 29:29? That there are secrets which belong unto the Lord our God alone and should therefore not be intruded by the fleshly mind, Col. 2:18

4. Enumerate some things which "belong unto us" as seen in:

(1) Mark 4:11-12, 34 - The secrets of the kingdom

(2) Psa. 103:7 - The secret of his ways

(3) Psa. 103:7 - The secret of his acts

(4) I Sam. 3:7 - The secret of his word (voice)

(5) Psa. 31:20 - The secret of his presence

(6) Ezek. 1:1-28 - The secret of his glory

D. THE SECRET OF HIS GLORY

1. Note what was revealed to Ezekiel in:

(1) Ezek. 8:4 - The presence of the glory

(2) Ezek. 1:28 - The likeness of the glory

(3) Ezek. 1:5-14 - The mystery of the glory

(4) Ezek. 1:15-19 - The activity of the glory

(5) Ezek. 1:20-21 - The dynamic of the glory

2. Observe the steps of the departure of the glory from:

(1) Ezek. 9:3 - It is gone up from the cherub, its normal abiding place

(2) Ezek. 10:4 - It is standing over the threshold thereby indicating that it is on its way out

(3) Ezek. 10:18 - It is standing over the cherubims, having left the threshold and the Holy of Holies

(4) Ezek. 11:23 - It is standing upon the mountain, having left both the temple and city

3. Give the implication of the fact that the glory "stood":

(1) Over the threshold, Ezek. 10:4 - It is reluctant to leave the temple and gives time to repent

(2) Over the cherubims, Ezek. 10:18 - It is reluctant to leave the Jewish religious system and gives more time to repent

(3) Upon the mountain, Ezek. 11:23 - It is reluctant to leave the land and gives additional time to repent

4. What is to be observed from Ezek. 43:2 and 44:4? That the glory will return following Israel's repentance and their acceptance of the Messiah in the last days

5. Point out the implication of the fact that the glory left and returned by way of the east, Ezek. 11:23 and 44:4. The conditions which compelled its departure must be reversed to make possible its return

E. THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

1. Concerning the presence of God, what is learned from:

(1) Jer. 23:24? That it is present everywhere

(2) I Sam. 3:10? That it can also be made perceivable by the human faculties such as hearing

2. To what is the presence of God likened in:

(1) Psa. 31:20? To a shelter (a place of protection)

(2) Ex. 33:12-14? To a companion (an associate or partner)

(3) Ex. 13:21-22? To a guide (Num. 9:15-23)

(4) Luke 6:3-4? To bread (shewbread), lit. "bread of presence"

(5) Psa. 71:3? To a resort (a frequented place) John 18:2

(6) Psa. 15:1-5? To a home (a permanent dwelling place)

3. Who shall find a home in the presence of God, Psa. 15:2-5? He who brings into subjection his entire personality in total conformity to the demands of the laws of God

4. Give the implication of the statement "He that doeth these things shall never be moved" (v. 5): He who thus submits his faculties to the control of God shall never be required to vacate the home of the presence of God

5. To what is the presence of God likened in Isa. 33:14? To a devouring fire with everlasting burnings, i.e., the ever sanctifying fire of the Spirit of God

6. Those who can stand God's sanctifying fire enjoy what privileges according to Isa. 33:14-17?

- (1) Living in the constant presence of God
- (2) Finding in God a perpetual refuge
- (3) Receiving all necessary sustenance
- (4) Beholding the king in his beauty

E. LOSING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

1. What is evident from Judg. 16:20? That it is possible to lose the presence of God
2. How may the presence of God be lost in the light of:
 - (1) Gen. 3:8? By hiding from his presence because of a consciousness of guilt from sinning against God
 - (2) Gen. 4:14-16? By being deprived of his presence through sinning against man
 - (3) Jonah 1:1-3? By fleeing from his presence in refusal to do his will
 - (4) Judg. 16:1-31? By trifling with the secret of consecration and its consequent loss
 - (5) I Sam. 15:22-23, 16:14? By infringement of his sovereignty through a deliberate act of disobedience
 - (6) Ezek. 8:1-18? By idolatrous substitution of God with practices and attitudes that infringe upon his deity
 - (7) Song of S. 5:2-8? By reluctance to respond to the approach of his presence because of inconvenience
 - (8) Hos. 2:5? By disinterest in his presence because of preference for other objects of affection
 - (9) Luke 2:41-46? By neglect of his presence through preoccupation with other interests
 - (10) Rev. 3:20-22? By failure to make use of a given opportunity through sheer unwillingness to respond to his call
3. Comment on Ex. 19:12, 21-24: Man's condition may constitute a barrier between himself and God

F. KEEPING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

1. Show how the presence of God may be kept as seen in:
 - (1) Isa. 33:14-17 - By rectitude of life in conformity with the nature and laws of God
 - (2) I Chron. 15:1 - By making room for his presence through the elimination of things that merely clutter our lives and waste our time
 - (3) I Chron. 15:1 - By protecting the presence of God against the encroachment of things that are incompatible with his presence and tend to displace it
 - (4) Hos. 5:6, 15 - By the avoidance of those things which oblige God to withdraw his presence as a corrective disciplinary measure
2. To what is the absence of the presence of God in Job 23:3, 8-9 due in the light of Job 23:10?

(1) To the necessity of testing Job because of Satan's challenge in Job 1:6-12 and 2:1-8

(2) To the opportunity provided by this necessity, namely:

a. The opportunity to humble Job because of his overconfident assertions, Job 42:3

b. The opportunity to refine Job because of his proclaimed self-righteousness, Job 29:1-25, 42:5-6

3. How did Job react to the absence of God's presence in Job 23:

10 and so prepare the way for its restoration? By his confident affirmation of:

(1) God's cognizance of his state ("he knoweth the way that I take")

(2) God's activity in his state ("when he hath tried me")

(3) God's purpose with his state ("I shall come forth as gold")

UNDERSTANDING IN "VISIONS OF GOD"

A. NEED OF UNDERSTANDING

1. Wherein do we need understanding according to:

(1) II Chron. 26:5? In divine communication (Dan. 1:17)

(2) Mark 12:24? In the Scriptures (Luke 24:45)

(3) Mark 12:24? In the power of God (I Cor. 1:18)

(4) Jer. 9:23-24? In the knowledge of God (Col. 1:10)

2. How is this need of understanding seen in:

(1) Job 33:23? There is a scarcity of interpreters of God

(2) Dan. 5:12? There is a need for dissolvers of doubts

(knots) - mysteries beyond natural understanding

3. Note man's proper attitude toward the knowledge of God in:

(1) Prov. 2:4 - It should be highly valued

(2) Prov. 2:3 - It should be earnestly desired

(3) Prov. 2:4 - It should be diligently sought

4. Comment on Jer. 9:6: The knowledge of God can be rejected by sheer dishonesty

5. Note God's attitude toward man's knowledge of God in:

(1) John 17:3 - He desires man to know him

- (2) Amos 5:8 - He exhorts man to know him
- (3) Jer. 24:7 - He enables man to know him
- (4) Zeph. 3:17 - He rejoices when man knows him
- (5) Ex. 33:13 - We may pray to know him

B. IMPARTATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

1. Observe three major media which God employs in imparting the knowledge of God as seen in:

- (1) Ex. 31:12-18 - Communication (Gal. 2:2)
- (2) John 14:9 - Association (Psa. 25:14)
- (3) I Cor. 2:9-10 - Revelation (Eph. 3:3)

2. What three forms of communication are seen in:

- (1) II Pet. 1:17-21? The written word (Rom. 4:3)
- (2) John 17:8? The spoken word (I Cor. 1:21)
- (3) John 1:1, 14:6? The Living Word (John 5:39-40)

3. What three forms of association are seen in:

- (1) Gen. 17:1? Walking BEFORE God in sanctification
- (2) II Kings 23:3? Walking AFTER God in obedience
- (3) Gen. 5:22, 24? Walking WITH God in fellowship

4. Concerning revelation, what is to be observed from Eph. 1:15-19?

- (1) Our need of enlightenment by the spirit of revelation
- (2) Our need of the spirit of wisdom to make proper use of this revelation

5. Comment on:

- (1) I Cor. 2:11-12 - Only the Spirit of God knows the things
of God, therefore the things of God cannot be known apart from the Spirit of God
- (2) I Cor. 2:13 - The communication of spiritual things requires the employment of spiritual language
- (3) I Cor. 2:14 - The unspiritual man is incapable of understanding spiritual things for he lacks spiritual discernment and therefore not only rejects, but also ridicules them

6. Wherein do the following scriptures show the superiority of divine revelation?

- (1) Isa. 55:9? In that the ways of God are higher than the ways of man

(2) Isa. 55:9? In that the thoughts of God are higher than the thoughts of man

(3) I Cor. 1:25? In that the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man

(4) I Cor. 1:25? In that the weakness of God is stronger than the strength of man.

(5) I Cor. 2:9-10? In that revelation goes beyond the capability of the natural faculties of man

7. In the light of the following scriptures, divine revelation is not necessarily consonant with what?

(1) I Cor. 1:25-29? Human logic

(2) Joshua 6:1-20? Classical methods

(3) I Sam. 16:1-13? Human expectations

(4) I Sam. 17:38-50? Orthodox means

(5) Judges 11:1; Heb. 11:32? Social status (I Sam. 2:8)

(6) Matt. 20:25-27? Rules of protocol

(7) Heb. 11:3? Scientific premises

(8) Mark 7:3, 13? Religious traditions

(9) John 4:9? Ecclesiastical prejudices

(10) Luke 9:59-62; 10:4? Cultural patterns

(11) Mark 12:19-25? Social concepts

(12) John 7:15; Acts 4:13? Current academic standards

(13) II Tim. 4:16? Popular opinion

8. Religious traditions can do what, Mark 7:7-13?

(1) Reject and nullify God's word

(2) Substitute man's doctrines for God's

C. CATEGORIES OF "HEARERS"

1. Into what two categories did Jesus divide his hearers in Matt. 11:25-26? The wise and the prudent

2. Who are the "wise and prudent" in the light of:

(1) I Cor. 1:18-29? The wise after the flesh

(2) Rom. 12:16? The wise in their own conceits

(3) John 6:41-42? The prejudiced

(4) John 6:52? The rationalists

3. What is evident from Matt. 13:15? That there are those who are willfully predisposed against the truth

4. To the predisposed against the truth, Jesus said what in:

(1) Matt. 13:10-11? That unto them the understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of God is not given

(2) Matt. 13:12? That from them will be taken that knowledge they seem to have (Luke 8:18)

5. What astounding truth is evident from:

(1) Matt. 11:25? That God deliberately withholds the knowledge of the truth from the wise and prudent

(2) Matt. 11:26? That God does this because he deems it good in his sight

"IS THE SEER HERE?" I SAM. 9:11

A. MEANING OF "SEER"

1. Point out the meaning of the term "seer" from:

(1) I Sam. 9:9 - It is another term for "prophet"

(2) II Sam. 15:27 - One who sees, inferring that he has received a communication from God

(3) II Chron. 33:18 - One who speaks in the name of God

(4) I Pet. 4:11 - One who speaks as the oracle of God

(5) Ex. 4:15-16 - One who speaks as the mouthpiece of God

2. Note the historic attitudes toward the "seer" of God in:

(1) Amos 7:12 - "O thou seer, go, flee thee away"

(2) Amos 7:13 - "Prophecy not again any more at Bethel" (lit. "house of God")

(3) Isa. 30:10 - "Prophecy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things"

(4) II Chron. 16:10 - 'Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house"

(5) II Chron. 18:23 (16-26) - "Then Zedekiah . . . smote Micaiah upon the cheek"

(6) Luke 11:51 - "From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias which perished between the altar and the temple"

3. What is evident from Lam. 2:14? That there are "seers" with false visions

4. What is to be learned from the following passages concerning false prophets?

(1) Jer. 14:14; 23:21? That they speak without having heard from God and been commissioned by God

(2) Deut. 18:22; Jer. 23:16, 26? That they speak by presumption, and not by revelation

(3) Jer. 23:21 - That they run without being sent

(4) Prov. 25:14? That they disappoint expectations

(5) Jer. 23:32? That they do not benefit the hearers

(6) Jer. 23:28? That their words are mere chaff

5. What is evident from Jer. 23:28? That there are true prophets, etc with a true vision from God

6. What is to be learned from the following passages concerning true prophets?

(1) I Sam. 3:20? That they speak with divine authorization

(2) Zech. 7:12? That they have a message to convey

(3) Jer. 25:4? That they go because they are sent

(4) Hos. 12:10? That they are indeed God's mouthpiece

7. To what does God liken the words of the true prophet in:

(1) Jer. 23:28? To wheat that nourishes (Psa. 147:14)

(2) Jer. 23:29? To fire that kindles (Luke 24:32)

(3) Jer. 23:29? To a hammer that is effective (Isa. 55:11)

B. THE PROPHET AS A "SEER"

1. What do we learn from John 3:32 and Acts 4:20? That the prophet of God speaks what he has seen and heard from God

2. What, for example, might a prophet see according to:

(1) I Kings 14:1-6? The hidden identity of a man's wife

(2) II Kings 5:20-27? The covetousness of a servant

(3) II Chron. 18:18-24? A scene in heaven as the secret of a scene on earth

(4) Acts 5:1-11? The secret counsels of the human heart

(5) Acts-11:27-30? The coming of a future event

(6) John 4:5-29? The marital status of a woman

(7) Rev. 2:1-3:22? The true condition of the churches

3. What, for example, might a prophet hear according to:

(1) I Kings 13:1-16? Instructions concerning a journey

(2) Jer. 1:4-8, 17? Exhortation in timidity and fearfulness

- (3) Jer. 1:18-19? Assurance in time of opposition
- (4) Jer. 11:18-19? Disclosure of personal danger
- (5) Jer. 15:10-11? Comfort in time of distress
- (6) Ezek. 3:16-21? Warning regarding responsibility
- (7) Jonah 3:1-2? Reproof for disobedience

C. IMPLICATIONS OF A PROPHET'S MINISTRY

1. What is to be observed in:

- (1) Ezek. 2:8-9? The hand of divine Providence brings to the prophet all that touches him
- (2) Ezek. 2:10? The prophet is made aware of the implications of his ministry

2. Note the implications of his ministry from Ezek. 2:10:

- (1) Lamentations - Audible expressions of sorrow
- (2) Mourning - A state of distressing sadness
- (3) Woe - The consequences of men's rebellion

3. Comment on Ezek. 3:1-4 and Rev. 10:8-10: The prophet must eat his message, not only in the acceptance of the truth, but also in its application in personal experiences

4. What is meant by:

- (1) "Honey for sweetness?" The Word of God is sweet to those whose delight is God (Psa. 40:8)
- (2) "My belly was bitter?" The suffering involved in the application of the word to personal experience

5. In Ezek. 2:6 the prophet is informed that "briars and thorns" would be with him. Suggest the implications from:

- (1) Ezek. 2:6 - The people's words (Jer. 18:18)
- (2) Ezek. 2:6 - The people's looks (Jer. 1:8, 17)
- (3) Ezek. 3:7 - The people's attitude (Ezek. 33:30-33)

D. THE PROPHET'S DIET, II Chron. 18:26

1. Suggest the nature of the prophet's bread from:

- (1) Matt. 13:54-59 - Blind prejudice (John 9:1-34)
- (2) John 7:5 - Disbelieving rejection (Acts 7:25)
- (3) Mark 15:7-11 - Malicious envy (Acts 7:9)

- (4) Luke 6:22-23 - Social segregation (Psa. 69:8)
- (5) John 15:18-19, 25 - Unmerited hatred (Gen. 37:4)
- (6) II Tim. 4:14-15 - Hostile opposition (Acts 18:5-6)
- (7) Matt. 9:24 - Scornful ridicule (II Chron. 36:16)
- (8) Psa. 69:7, 9 - Unjust reproaches (Heb. 11:26)
- (9) John 6:60, 66 - Cruel desertion (II Tim. 4:10)
- (10) Gal. 5:11; 6:12 - Painful persecution (John 15:20-21)

2. Suggest the nature of the prophet's cup from:

- (1) Ezek. 3:1; 2:8 - Submission (Luke 22:42)
- (2) Ezek. 3:22-23 - Obedience (I Kings 20:35-37)
- (3) Isa. 20:2-4 - Humiliation (Acts 5:41)
- (4) Ezek. 3:24 - Isolation (Jer. 15:17)
- (5) Ezek. 3:25 - Restraint (Jer. 20:2; 33:1-16)
- (6) Ezek. 3:26 - Silence (Jer. 28:11; II Kings 4:29)
- (7) Ezek. 4:10 - Privation (Jer. 38:9; 37:21)
- (8) Ezek. 4:12 - Suffering (Psa. 129:3; 66:12; 69:20-21)
- (9) Ezek. 24:16-18 - Hidden sorrow (Luke 2:35; Ezek. 21:6)
- (10) John 16:32 - Aloneness (Lam. 3:28; 1:12)

3. Comment on Matt. 20:20-23:

- (1) Our ignorance of the cost of position might be as great as our ambition for position
- (2) Sharing his throne involves sharing his cup

4. By what is the prophet of God sustained in:

- (1) John 4:32-34? By his delight in, and performance of, the will of God
- (2) Jer. 15:16? By his rejoicing in, and personal appropriation of, the word of God
- (3) Acts 23:11? By the interposition of, and strengthening by, the personal presence of the Lord
- (4) I Kings 19:5-8? By the appearance of, and the provisions supplied by, an angel of the Lord

E. THE PROPHET'S REWARD, MAT. 10:41

1. Comment on Peter's question in Mat. 19:27: There is a danger of a commercial motive - serving God for what we can get, rather than for what he is
2. The Lord's reply in Mk. 10:28-30 shows what?
 - (1) That reward is commensurate with sacrifice
 - (2) That reward is both present and future
3. How must rewarded sacrifice be motivated as seen in:
 - (1) Mk. 10:29; Lu. 6:22? For his sake
 - (2) Mk. 10:29; 8:35? For the gospel's sake
 - (3) I Cor. 9:17; I Pet. 5:2? With a willing mind
4. In what sense can we have a hundred-fold in this present life, Mk. 10:30? In that the joy and satisfaction is many times greater than that which we would receive from the things sacrificed
5. Comment on Heb. 11:24-26: A due regard for the recompense of the reward will minimize the severity of our afflictions and thus increase our ability to endure them (Heb. 11:27; Mat. 10:22)
6. Comment on Luke 6:23: Whatever the nature of the reward, it will be so great as to merit jubilant rejoicing and exceeding gladness in its very anticipation

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