

“A VISION OF GOD”

*“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the
Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,
and his train filled the temple.”*

Isaiah 6:1



Dr. Pennon Lockhart



“Come now, and let us reason together ...”

***“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:
though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”***
Isaiah 1:18

יכח

{yaw-kahh'} Meaning to reason to prove, decide, or to convince.

A Vision Of God

(A Reasoning In Discourse)

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Forward

The literal sense of the word *vision* calls for no special comment, for it is the common word for seeing with the eyes as in Genesis 27:1 which speaks of Isaac's eyes being dim so that he could not see due to old age. But this word has extended and metaphorical meanings. This is particularly true in the case of bible interpretation and the process of comprehension.

The word of God says in John 14:26 ***“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”*** In short, the Holy Spirit confirms His word (*the Bible*) that has been written for our rule of life in our mission to glorify God. ***The Bible is the outward text and the Spirit is the inward Teacher*** who speak the same thing in our hearts. But we must bring an eager desire to receive instruction. We must give attention if we desire to become proficient in the school of God; and especially we need patience, until the Holy Spirit enables us to understand what we thought that we had often read or heard.

Our initial understanding of the biblical text may not objectively represent the Holy Spirit's conceptualization. The gap that is created between the conceptualized truth of the Word and the reader's understanding of its meaning is our first point of reasoning. The outward teaching will be in vain and useless unless it is accompanied by the teaching of the Spirit. God often uses human teachers that He has gifted for that task or He addresses us inwardly by His Spirit as we study His Word. This can be done at the same moment, or at different times as the Holy Spirit thinks fit. But nothing is brought to your remembrance without the initial act of

diligent study in all things necessary to salvation so that we might teach them to others in word and deed. Sometimes through inattention, or lack of understanding, many things slip our minds or we just forget. This accounts for how the gospel writers some years after the death of Christ; at different times and places, could commit to writing the life, actions, sayings, and sermons of Christ. The Holy Spirit enabled their recall ability and supplied all the minute associated circumstances.

If we concentrate only on the perceived meaning of a word or terminology within the text such as the word *‘vision,’* there arises a second point of reasoning which is the discussion of the difference between the *denotative meaning* of vision and the *connotative reference* that is made to it within the context. The actual meaning of a word is called its **denotative** definition which is the definition that it carries in the real world. The **connotative reference** is concerned with the metaphorical concept to which the associated implications refer to in the body of work.

For example, the psalmist says in Psalm 73:9 – *“They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.”* The denotative meaning of the word *“tongue”* is a fleshy movable organ of the mouth used in tasting and swallowing food and as a speech organ in humans. Tongues do not walk as implied in the connotation above. The **connotative reference** used in the example passage above for *tongue* refers to the wicked who walk through the earth using their tongues to speak against God.

In like manner, if I utter the word *“vision,”* the denotative meaning of the word *“vision”* is the faculty of sight or power of seeing: physical eyesight; while the connotative reference may be to something seen otherwise than by ordinary sight. It could refer to unusual competence in discernment or

perception; intelligent foresight, or a mental image produced by the imagination (*as in a dream or trance*). This would include the mystical experience of seeing as if with the eyes of the supernatural or a supernatural being. It includes extraordinary wisdom constituting the general sense of the word “**vision**” in addition to its literal sense. One of the difficulties in Bible interpretation is that some **denotative meanings** are also used in the same sense as **connotative references**, especially in the case of prophetic discourse (*writings*).

In our frail and mortal state, we cannot bear the splendor of God’s pure Light and the connotative references in this book to seeing God ‘*whom no man hath seen, nor can see*’ are harmonized by Jesus’ declaration to Philip – “... **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.**” It is only in Christ that we behold Him, at least spiritually through our salvation experience. The mortality of human nature must be taken away in order to enjoy the beatific vision of Him.

Chapter One focuses on the historical and sociological setting of the text of 1 Timothy 6:16 concerning the **God Unseen**. We cannot approach to His light while we are surrounded by this mortal flesh. Therefore, regardless of how much we study the deepest secrets of God, some things will remain hidden from us.

Chapter 2 illustrates how the indwelling Spirit fortifies God’s people enabling them to hold fast through adversity and difficult circumstances. We are encouraged to look upward and inward to establish our hearts even through internal conflicts and struggles. God’s invisible hand is highlighted during the Civil Rights era and the period of neo-slavery is remembered. Upbringing in the ‘*new plantation*’ and the mis-education in America is brought into focus.

Chapter 3 helps us to understand that before a person can desire a vision of God, God must first implant that desire within them. Until you *desire* to see with your heart the meaning of the great things that God has done in your midst, you will not be able to *understand*. The wondrous works of deliverance that God has accomplished on behalf of His people should motivate our *Desire To See*.

Chapter 4 is an extension of the title of the book – *A Vision of God*. Reflecting on the prophet Isaiah’s call, we see that there are several points worth noting and we give sincere attention to the description of the scene itself. Only when a person has been convicted of sin and has understood that the Redeemer, the Living Christ, has taken on the guilt of our sin are they willing and ready to see and serve God joyfully, to go wherever God may call them.

Chapter 5 discusses the Revelation of Jesus Christ as *The ‘Beatific’¹ Vision* and states that His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face. We might draw the two into a unity by the suggestion that the glorified saints continually serve, and through serving, they continually see. There is a deep sense in which we *see* through *servicing* and our service is one of heaven’s eye-salves – *God’s spittle mixed with clay* extracted from the *Balm of Gilead* on earth.

Chapter 6 speaks of a miracle related by the evangelist Mark where Christ restored sight to a blind man, not in an instant, as He was generally accustomed to do, but in a

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Beatific (bē-tif’-ik) is a word used as an adjective that imparts or expresses bliss or Blessedness. (From the Latin *beatificus*, *beatus* = happy + *ficus* or *facere* = to make)

gradual manner. Jesus provided the ability for a blind man to see Him. Our vision, which has so often been blinded by the opaqueness of self deception and distortion, can now be corrected by this same Jesus who provides new lenses – ***Corrective Lenses for Your Spirit.***

Chapter 7 – For many of us the obvious is the evident. For others it may be something different. For some, the obvious is anything in front of them, confronting them, directly challenging them... in their face – in their way. It is in this sense that I use the word as expressed in our chapter title – ***Missing The Obvious. “Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.”*** The fool of Proverbs 17:24 is the kind of person who sees everything except the obvious thing. They see the far-away surprisingly, but they miss what is right before their face. They are the persons who are blinded by proximity. The chapter affirms how the Word of God keeps us from being blinded by proximity.

Chapter 8. The title of this chapter is in the form of a question – ***What Must You See to Believe?*** The message examines our personal belief and shows how Jesus experienced disbelief not only among His own people but also the religious leaders of the nation.

Chapter 9 – Our focus in chapter 9 is on ***The Evidence of Things Not Seen.*** The word ***evidence*** is defined as a proof – that by which a thing is proven or tested. That which is needed to get a conviction. Here we speak of evidence of things past; present, and things to come that give witness to God’s continual intercession and the manifold blessings of grace revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We have evidence of the invisible realities of another world and the eyes of faith have both shown certainty and evidence of it.

Chapter 10 – *Holding Fast to the Unseen* describes what happens to people who base their lives on the Unseen, who count on results that are not calculated in the logical systems of this world. As a result, they endure persecution and marginalization but they embrace God’s truth believing that “...*we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope:*”

Chapter 11 – *The Church In An Age of Pluralism*
Here, corrections are made to distorted images of who we are as a people. Consequences of European colonization in Africa is reviewed followed by encouragement to hold fast. We are here by God’s election for an appointed time. We are holding to His Word by faith which is able to keep us until the day of redemption.

Chapter 12 – *God’s Perfect Timing* as the closing chapter renders Good News and a plan of action when faced with difficult circumstances. Reflections on the history of enslavement is followed by our walk of faith which provides freedom in bondage if we stay with God’s perfect plan.

For God’s glory!



GYE NYAME

Adinkra Symbol: “*Gye Nyame*” refers principally to the omnipotence, omnipresence, and immortality of God. It is revered as one of the highest Akan spiritual symbols.

And of His fullness we have all received,
and grace for grace.
For the law was given through Moses,
but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
No one has seen God at any time.
The only begotten Son,
who is in the bosom of the Father,
He has declared Him.

John 1:16-18

