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THE SON'S VIEW

PART THREE – SON-TREK THE NEXT GENERATION

Proper Vision is Central to Building Proper Order

In the church world today much is said about vision. Like all Bible terms, our definition, influences our understanding. An improper definition will lead to an improper or incomplete understanding. As with the phrase, baptism of the Holy Spirit, the definition as to what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is, greatly influences what a particular pastor or church is willing to understand and believe about the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Vision of course is the ability to see. In Scripture it is the ability to see, according to God's choosing, what God has done in the heavens so that it may be accomplished on the earth. It is impossible to properly lead people without a well-defined vision. Vision sets a mark in the Spirit toward which the people can work. If it is missing or confused then the people have no ability to adequately define their ministries or to receive a proper vision of their own. Disunity of the body and lack of positive direction are the consequence.

What is commonly called vision in the church today is often little more than a business plan by church leaders for the promotion of their ministries and churches. Even visions that come from the mind of man can produce worldly success, (numbers, money, notoriety), within the church. These types of visions usually speak of the call of God on a leader to win a city or a country or even the entire world for Christ.

A vision from God in which the church can find biblical order is something quite different from these. To lead requires vision. It is the obligation of all leadership to provide it. *Where there is no vision, the people perish:* That is they cast off restraint, there is no vision to keep them focused or to give them understanding of what the Lord is doing in their local setting. The vision God calls

leadership to is the vision of His purpose contained in the heavens.

- **Prepared to receive Vision:**

(Exo 3:3,4 KJV) And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

God was getting Moses' attention by doing something supernatural with the natural world. Moses had to turn aside to see what the burning bush was all about. To gain vision we have to be willing to turn aside from our normal ingrained routine. As Mark Hanby exhorts; to be willing to stop doing all those good things the Lord never told us to do. This will usually require a supernatural intervention by fire – not a fire of destruction but a fire of construction in your life. It was only when the Lord saw that Moses turned, that He spoke to him out of the fire His vision for Moses, (the set man), and Israel. The ability to see the supernatural is not enough, we have to be willing to turn aside to hear God's voice of vision through the supernatural.

Moses was a leader. Like all leaders he needed preparation. He would have been unwilling naturally, to gain this preparation seeing he was in a position to partake of the riches and fruits of Egypt. After all he was educated in the best schools of Egypt, knew the most influential men of the land, and was trained in being part of the ruling class. What other preparation could he need? So the Lord as with us had to allow some unpleasant circumstances to move him into hidden places, to instruct him in a wilderness. His forty-year time of preparation was coming to an end. He needed a vision from heaven; a vision which would give him the understanding, direction and confidence to lead God's people. A vision not of himself or born out of his desires for the people but a vision that would speak from God to the people, a vision upon which all willing hearts in Israel could build.

As you are aware God spoke to Moses saying "Moses, Moses", or using his name in a double enunciation thereby confirming that God Himself would establish His heavenly purpose for Israel in the earth through Moses. Godly vision always involves seeing in the heavens and being confirmed that He will establish it here on earth.

- **Vision and purpose are always expanding:**

(Ex 3:8a) And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey;

In Exodus chapters three and four, God speaks vision and purpose to Moses. Our understanding of vision and our purpose in God is always expanding. We do not get the whole loaf at one time but vision and purpose are parceled out as we grow in the Lord. (Ex 3:10), Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. With this one statement God summarized for Moses his purpose for which he had been

waiting eighty years. It was not Moses' complete purpose but an outline into which many other parts would be added. His vision for Moses' ministry and that of Israel's, is interspersed throughout these chapters specific elements of which are spoken of many times by other Bible writers.

God was going to move Israel. God was listening. He would visit them and would also speak through Moses to them and Pharaoh. He was going to take away their bondage, God was going to answer their cry and He would empower Moses and use him as His instrument to accomplish this. God would reveal His name, (nature), to them. He was going to lead them to a land of promise. What a vision! It wasn't the complete vision, more would come at Sinai and other places, but it gave the people direction, understanding, purpose and a vision into which others if spiritual, like Joshua, could receive their specific vision. Our vision for our churches should incorporate similar characteristics.

- ***The place of Vision:***

(Ex. 3:1); Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

Notice where Moses was and what he was doing when this light of vision and purpose pierced his life. He was in the desert near Horeb, (waste), tending the flock of Jethro, (excellence), his father in law. He was not dwelling in the cities where the daily exchange of goods and interaction of the masses occur. He was not doing some illustrious work to which others took notice. He was not in the spotlight of man's adoration or in a position of power that he had once held.

What are the usual circumstances in which vision and purpose are found in our lives? It will be in deserted places where we are empty of an atmosphere of self-promotion and the confusion and opinion of religious thinking. It will be while we are tending the flock, (saints), and doing the "present" work the Lord has given into our hand. It will be while we are doing the work of our father in ministry and following the excellence of that relationship.

While so engaged the Lord brings us to what the world may think of as a waste of time, but really is the mountain of God, waste or empty of everything but God Himself. In this manner the Lord brings vision, and from such surroundings He brings forth purpose. It is always in the mountain, (the highest point of spiritual revelation), where the view of heaven is the clearest.

- **Promises of God verses Vision from God:**

If we look at most visions recorded in the Scripture we see that they involve instructions related to a journey. Abraham, Moses, Noah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Paul and John all had visions that spoke of journeying to new lands or higher places in the land. Set ministry needs to expect that vision for ministry or a church will involve direction in journeys that will lead to higher realms in God. If we are not seeing in the heavens what should be completed here on earth, we have to question whether

it is really a vision from God or merely our own sincere desire for the Lord to act in our ministry or church.

Many visions can be nothing more than a wish list in which ministries hope to gain God's participation and the people's acceptance, by calling it a "vision" from the Lord. "God is going to give us a large and well appointed, new church building"; or "the Lord is going to use this church to win this city for Christ"; or "the Lord is going to prosper us beyond our wildest dreams and show the lost that He owns the riches of the world". These are all nice sentiments but if true, they speak more of promises than they do of vision from the Lord. Promises from God are by themselves not vision.

- **True vision will be part of our ministry father's vision:**

Most visions that come from religion speak of God changing our natural circumstances and are almost devoid of direction or heavenly purpose or understanding of reaching higher in God. A true vision from the Lord will be part of another vision. If I don't know my father's vision I will never be able to fully receive God's vision for my ministry. If I can't write down and explain the vision of my ministry father, how will I ever pass the elements of that vision on to my sons? If I don't understand my father's vision, how will I fully grasp the vision the Lord would give me? I won't, it's impossible. Unless vision grows and progresses through the generations, the purpose of God in our lives will remain disconnected.

As we mature the Lord speaks vision into our ministries. My vision, although not identical, must be related to and come forth from my father's vision. If this does not happen there will be two opposing visions in a church causing *division*, literally, two visions or the separation of vision. This is why people who do not agree with or promote the vision of the house will always cause division and a lack of unity. They don't see it as their vision, or the vision of God for the house but a man's vision. A true vision for a ministry will always provide direction and opportunity for all under that vision to receive a distinct personal vision that can be integrated into the larger vision.

Godly vision, not gifting or doctrine, is the foundation upon which the unity of the body is bound together by love. God has a general vision, to save the lost and restore the world unto Himself. This is spoken of in the gospel references to the great commission. The way He brings the great commission to pass is to give "set ministries" specific portions of that general vision which in turn are broken down further to those under the set ministries vision – the principal of father to son. In so doing the complete vision of God is accomplished and the entire body is connected through a commonality of vision, in the unity of faith. The problem of course is that the church by and large is not operating under father/son order nor seeking this type of vision.

- **Ministry is built on vision and is progressive:**

(Acts 26:14-19) And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick

against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

The Apostle Paul needed a vision to complete the work of the Lord. His vision was not one of building buildings nor was it a promise that he would have thousands of followers. In fact nowhere in his writings does he number the people of any of the churches he established. Later religious writers often romanticize his ministry but it is probable that most people of the Roman Empire outside of Christianity, knew very little if anything of this messenger from God. Even a minor television preacher of today is probably recognized by more people than those who knew Paul in his entire lifetime.

His was a ministry that operated on scant resources. Much of his time was spent imprisoned inside cold stone walls with a stench reminiscent of an unkempt barnyard. At other times he labored with his hands to provide for the basic essentials of life. Always in danger, continually being met with opposition. He is often called great. Is this because of his writings we now cherish so dearly; the great number of people he influenced; or is it due to the immense spiritual power and miracles that emanated from his ministry? Perhaps it is a combination of all these, yet he saw his ministry in direct contradiction to the fame we now so abundantly lavish on him today.

Paul's greatness obviously lays in the fact that he was on a quest to know Jesus. His was not just in association but a relationship with the Creator. Beyond this he knew what so many in Christianity never acquire. He had a vision from God and knew his identity, and his purpose independent from man or organization.

He knew when his ministry was completed, "I have finished the course". The reason he knew this was because he had a vision and understood his purpose. Paul knew what he was supposed to accomplish and when it was completed. Too often ministries fail to turn at a spiritual intersection or follow a new artery of ministry because they do not have clear vision. Many think their ministries should go on in perpetuity, building, growing and flourishing. They have no idea when their ministry should veer or markedly be altered because they have not clearly seen their vision. Paul finished the portion of the vision of God allotted into his care. That portion is complete, but our portions are still in the process of being fulfilled if we have proper vision and know our purpose.

The Apostle Paul's vision, as all visions, was progressive. In Acts chapters 9, 22 and 26, we have recorded three listings of the same episode. In each of the three we find information related to the vision he received from the Lord. In each subsequent retelling of the event Paul gives greater detail

of those things pertaining to his vision. As he walked in ministry the vision became clearer and clearer. Areas he did not fully understand became more distinct as natural events confirmed the spiritual pronouncements of the vision.

(Acts 26:19 KJV) Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: Paul's conclusion before king Agrippa of his ministry was that he was not disobedient to the vision. Completion of our ministries likewise is conditioned upon our obedience in understanding and fulfilling our vision.

- **Vision must be received, written and plain:**

(Habakkuk 2:1-3) I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reprov'd. And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

The Prophet is meditating on what the Lord would speak and how he would answer. As a Prophet he stands watch over the land, and was set by God. The set ministry in a church incorporates this same function. God sets him over the work. He watches for the Lord to inquire before His presence. When God answers Habakkuk, He gives him a vision.

The Lord tells Habakkuk to write the vision. A vision that is not written will always be unclear; it will be left open to personal interpretation. Writing our visions will do at least three things for us that cannot be accomplished in any other way. First, it will clarify and refine the vision in our minds, allowing God to add understanding and insight to us. Second, it will give the people a concrete outline in understanding the purpose and direction of the church and their personal ministries and visions. Third, it allows our vision to be carried on in subsequent generations.

The Lord tells Habakkuk to make the vision plain. Is our vision understandable? Is it easy for others to see what is to be done and how it is connected to our father's vision? It has to be plain so that he may run that readeth it. How can our visions be read unless they are written? How can our sons and churches follow, unless we make it plain. Clear vision will allow the church to be unified in direction, ministry and purpose.

There is a simple test you can do to check whether or not your vision is understood and will become perpetual throughout your house. Have your sons write down your vision on one side of a piece of paper. If they cannot, your vision will never be implemented in the church. How can they pass on that which they do not know or understand? If they write varying accounts of your vision, leaving out significant parts or adding things that should not be there, then perhaps you have not clearly implemented the vision in your house in a way that can be understood and followed.

Can we as set ministry write down our vision from the Lord for our ministry and church? If not

how are our sons and our churches supposed to implement what we cannot explain? If you have no written vision, how will your sons be able to fit their vision from the Lord into yours?

Finally a written and plain vision gives our sons and the church hope, direction, confidence and faith. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. The people can have confidence in what they are doing. They are not carried away by various doctrines or world events because they know what God is doing and what their purpose is in the vision He's given. They can live in patience because they understand what God is bringing to pass.

- ***Receiving a vision from the Lord:***

(Jer 23:16 KJV) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

(Lam 2:9 KJV) Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the LORD.

(1 Sam 3:1 KJV) And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

(John 9:40,41 KJV) And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Are all visions true? Obviously not. How then can we acquire godly vision and distinguish between that which is of man and that which is from God? In some ways our day is like that of the time of Eli; the priesthood is defiled, the spiritual order of father and son is fractured, the church is relying on past experience and signs from God. Those of us in relationship with Mark and Linda Hanby understand their ministry in some ways, like that of Samuel, is transitional, leading to the reestablishment of father/son order.

Because the church world is so out of order, its' gates are sunk, its' bars are broken and there is no vision from the Lord. The vision that comes forth by and large is a vision spoken out of the heart and not from a visitation of the Lord. This is why these visions usually speak only of promises and great exploits.

The parables and instances of healing the blind in the gospels are spiritual examples for us about godly vision or the lack there of. To be blind is the opposite of having vision. Jesus said that the consequence of being spiritually blind is that those who lead and those who follow would *both fall*

into the ditch. They have no direction, they don't know where they are going, they have no VISION! In Matthew chapter 23 Jesus pronounces woes upon religious leaders. Five times He calls them blind. They were blinded by money, by as Mark Hanby says, "making constants variables and variables constants, and by only being able to judge by outward appearance. How could they receive vision from the Lord?

From the gospels we learn that vision can be partial or perfect, that surrounding circumstances can influence vision and that vision can be corrected or improved. Now these gospel occurrences are certainly speaking of the personal condition of the heart, but in a broader sense they can be understood in ways that affect our ministries and churches. John devotes the entire ninth chapter of his gospel to the blind man, a type of ministry, and the effect his regaining sight had on the religious leaders. Jesus has come to bring sight to ministry. Those in religion who think they see, will never see. We need Jesus to anoint our eyes with vision to see into the Spirit.

Visitation, preparation, relationship, prayer, father/son order/scriptural foundation, hidden places, are all terms related to finding God's vision for our ministries. As written earlier those who receive godly vision usually receive it in a hidden place. Vision in the Bible invariably involves the visitation of the Lord. We are prepared by the Lord to be open to receive. It is birthed through prayer and our relationship with the Lord. It requires proper order in our lives. It is based on the Word.

It is my observation that before the Lord ever explains His vision for us in natural terms, He always gives us a scripture or portion of scripture. This word may burn in our hearts for a long period of time, through which He says to us in clear and unmistakable terms, "THIS IS YOU". Walking in father/son order, requires clearer, higher and truer vision than we have ever had before.

Next Issue: Part Four: Establishing Generational Order

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