

VISIONS AND REVELATIONS FROM THE LORD

“I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.” (2 Cor 12:1)

Visions and revelations played an important part in the life and ministry of Paul. The one described in this passage involved being caught up into the third heaven, or paradise. Whether in the body, or out of the body he couldn't tell. While there he heard inexpressible things he was not allowed to tell. This experience apparently involved his “thorn in the flesh”. Even though this thorn was a “messenger of Satan” God still used it to teach Paul that His strength was made perfect in Paul's weakness (2 Cor. 12:1 - 10).

Paul worked many miraculous signs and wonders (Rom. 15:19 which we will not mention at this time. Here are a few “visions and revelations”, however, that Paul received.

- Jesus appeared to him in a vision on the road to Damascus (Acts 9, 22, and 26). At this time Paul was specifically commissioned him to preach to the Gentiles (Acts 26:16 - 18).
- At this time Jesus also commanded Paul to go into the city and he would be told what to do. Then God also gave a vision to Ananias telling him where Paul was, and to go lay hands on him that he might regain his sight (Acts 9:1 - 19).
- Later in Jerusalem Paul fell into a trance and the Lord told him to quickly leave because the Jews would not accept his testimony (Acts 22:17, 18).
- Paul insisted that he did not receive the Gospel he preached from any man, but rather by revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:12).
- Paul wrote to the Ephesians that the “mystery” he preached came by revelation (Eph. 3:3).
- Just as the “twelve” spent three years with Jesus, Paul also apparently spent three years learning from Jesus (Gal. 1:15 - 18).
- Fourteen years later Paul went up to Jerusalem in response to a revelation (Gal. 2:2).
- In Antioch the Holy Spirit said to separate Barnabas and Saul for the work to which God had called them (Acts 13:1 - 3).
- At Lystra Timothy was pointed out to Paul by a prophetic utterance (1 Tim. 1:18).
- At Troaz Paul received a vision of a man from Macedonia begging him to come over and help (Acts 16:8 - 10).
- In Corinth the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision encouraging him to keep preaching and promising that no man would harm him (Acts 18:9).
- On his way to Jerusalem the Holy Spirit warned Paul that prison and hardships were waiting for him there (Acts 20:22, 23).
- At Caesarea a prophet named Agabus took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it, and prophesied that the Jews in Jerusalem would bind Paul and hand him over to the Gentiles (Acts 21:10, 11).
- In prison in Jerusalem the Lord told Paul to take courage because he was to testify in Rome (Acts 23:11).
- In the midst of a storm an angel stood by Paul and promised him that everyone on the ship would be saved, and also that he would stand before Caesar (Acts 27:23 - 26).

Paul not only experienced personal visions and revelations, but wanted others to experience them as well: **“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.” (Eph 1:17)** Paul wanted the Ephesians to experience wisdom and revelation so they could know Him better, perhaps wisdom and revelation will also do the same for us!