

NEXT VISION

LESSON 1: SIGHT

2 Kings 6:8-23

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Illustration: Ask students to look at a person next to them. Encourage them to gaze for a moment and then ask the question: **what do you see?** Allow students a bit of time for lighthearted laughter and encouraging words. Remind students that God sees us differently than how we see each other. Transition to the lesson below.

When God sees you, He perceives something extraordinary, far beyond what the rest of us see. His vantage point is distinct, revealing a depth beyond our superficial evaluations. While we tend to judge people at face value, God dives beneath the surface, delving into the depths of our being! Remarkably, He sees you precisely as you are, with a clarity that surpasses your own self-perception.

Often, we assess ourselves through the lenses of others: the image our parents painted, the version our friends defined, or even the character described by a particular teacher. But it's time for a fresh perspective—a chance to see ourselves through God's eyes. Let's call it a transformative shift. Seven times in the scripture God asks, **"What do you see?"** God is interested in our vision.

God's gaze is not influenced by age, skin color, or ancestry; rather, He beholds the true essence of our hearts. Within you, He witnesses the extraordinary qualities no one else can see. In fact, His deepest longing is to draw back the curtain, granting you a glimpse into your unique beauty.

COURSE GOAL

I seek to transform your vision, to help you SEE differently. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I hope to provide you with a new set of lenses—lenses that focus on what truly matters. I fervently pray that God's transformative power will enable you to see yourself and those around you in a fresh, captivating light.

COURSE TEXT

Have you heard of the captivating story found in **2 Kings 6:8-23**? It's a gripping tale centered on the **power of vision**, featuring the remarkable duo of Elisha and his loyal servant, Gehazi.

These verses form the bedrock of the entire five weeks we'll spend together. In the weeks that follow, we'll explore this narrative in depth, dissecting smaller sections for reflection. But for now, let's read the entire passage together.

Read 2 Kings 6:8-23

THE POWER OF VISION

What an incredible story! It's like something straight out of Hollywood. Elisha takes center stage as the lead, and Gehazi delivers an outstanding supporting performance. Drama intertwines with mystery and suspense. It's a riveting narrative, infused with spies, espionage, a nervous king, and a murderous plot. At the core, we uncover an invaluable lesson about the incredible **power of vision**.

Picture Gehazi stepping out onto the front porch, unaware of the imminent danger lurking in the distance. He casually sips a cup of cappuccino before tending to the mule. Suddenly, his eyes widen in shock. There, surrounding his home, is the Syrian army. His heart quickens with fear. *"Oh no, we're done for!"* he exclaims in sheer panic. *"It's over, kaput, finished! The moles will be delivering our mail soon!"* **"Elisha, what are we going to do?"** he cries out. **Vs. 15**

With unshakable confidence, Elisha strolls out onto the same porch, on that very same day, at that very moment, completely unfazed! He declares with certainty, *"Calm down, Gehazi! Everything is all right! It's a beautiful day, the sky is vibrant blue, the birds serenade us with song, and the warm gentle breeze is refreshing!"* **"And oh, by the way, their numbers are no match for us."** **Vs. 16**

SAME REALITY ... DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

How is it that two people can look at the same thing and see it in strikingly different ways?

One of the most famous motivational stories on the entrepreneurial circuit is that of the two salesmen from competing companies who are sent to a foreign country to assess the market for shoes.

Salesman One scouts around for a few days and then heads for the telegraph office to contact company headquarters. He writes: "Research complete. Unmitigated disaster. *Nobody* here wears shoes."

Likewise, Salesman Two does his research and heads for the same telegraph office. Once there, he composes the following: "Research complete. Glorious opportunity! *Nobody* here wears shoes!" ^[1]

Gehazi is salesman one. He looked out and beheld imminent defeat and despair. Elisha is salesman two. He looked eyes with victory and saw an impending celebration. These two players shared the same stage, and starred in the same play, but oh, how different their scripts were!

Now, transport yourself 2,500 years into the future and consider how people navigate the complexities of the year 2023. Surprisingly, not much has changed. Some folks view a situation and predict gloom and despair, while others spot the very same circumstances and boldly declare pending triumph.

Why is that? What fuels the grim outlook of some and the unconquerable optimism of others? There are countless answers to these questions, but I firmly believe that the crux lies in something profound: **PERSONAL VISION**.

IF YOU CAN SEE IT ... YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT!

People who lead future-oriented lives, guided by a clear vision and destination, tend to live with unwavering faith and boundless optimism. Their guiding adage is simple, yet powerful: **"If I can SEE it, I can achieve it!"** (Say it with me, everybody!)

For the next five weeks, let this be your fervent profession of faith: **"If I can SEE it, I can achieve it!"** Speak these words continuously throughout each day, and even when weariness threatens to consume you, declare it once more. When confronted with insurmountable challenges, let these words resound within you, **"If I can SEE it, I can achieve it!"**

Harness this empowering phrase to transform your trials into triumphs. John Mason rightly wrote, *"A problem is nothing more than a miracle when God gets hold of it."*

Gehazi viewed the problem through the limited lens of NATURAL vision, but Elisha saw beyond the problem through the expansive vista of SPIRITUAL vision. Your God-given vision is the great equalizer.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Before we move forward, let's preview the series. Prior to each training session, please read the Scripture text. This will help prepare your spirit for the invaluable insights you are about to receive.

NEXT VISION (If you can SEE it, you *can* achieve it!)

Lesson 1: Sight

2 Kings 6:8-14

Lesson 2: Visionary

2 Kings 6:15-17

Lesson 3: Fuel	2 Kings 6:15-17
Lesson 4: Blindfolds	2 Kings 6:15, 18
Lesson 5: Faith	2 Kings 6:18-20

Every lesson comes with a homework project. See it as a secret tool to unlock your personal vision. To find your project assignments, simply check the bottom of your weekly handout.

The first lesson has a home project to complete - you'll be crafting your very own clay creation, a unique design of your own making. It's due in week four. Let your imagination run wild and get creative. Don't worry about size or structure - just let your vision guide you!

VISION QUOTES

You will find eight 'vision' quotes in your student manual. Put a circle around the one that resonates with you the most and write a short paragraph at the bottom explaining why.

"When you have a clear vision, conviction, audacity, and tenacity, you become unstoppable."
— Germany Kent

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"The only thing worse than having no sight is to have sight but no vision." - Helen Keller

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"Cherish your visions and your dreams as they are the children of your soul, the blueprints of your ultimate achievements." - Napoleon Hill ^[2]

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"Although my circumstance was homeless, my vision wasn't!" – Eric Thomas

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"Don't be afraid to step out, have dreams, have visions, have hopes and always, always, always believe in miracles." - Joyce Meyer ^[3]

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"With a vision, people tackle the impossible and frequently accomplish it." - John Haggai

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"Without vision, people will go to another parish." - Rick Warren

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"Vision is a clear mental picture of what could be, fueled by the conviction that it should be."
- Andy Stanley ^[4]

Andy Stanley's words resonate deeply, especially when we consider Elisha. Elisha envisioned what could be—a double portion of Elijah's spirit—fueled by unwavering conviction that it should be. This vision set the stage for the miraculous events in Dothan, as recounted in **2 Kings**. This principle holds true for all aspects of life.

Visionaries have guided us throughout history.

- **Christopher Columbus** had a vision - he imagined a new country dedicated to God.
- **Henry Ford** had a vision - a car that every person could afford.
- **Martin Luther King** had a vision - a nation where all races and creeds could come together.

Our world has been transformed time and time again because of their unwavering resolve. As Tommy Barnett wisely asserted, *"Without visionaries we would be uncivilized, uneducated, and perhaps even unconverted to Christ."*

VISION DEFINED

Vision is like the mighty banks of a roaring river, directing the powerful flow of water. It breathes life into our souls, fueling our fervor and urging us forward. **Vision** is the strategic key to seizing God's appointed season, fueling our souls with relentless inspiration. It's the heartbeat of passion, driving us to pursue constant improvement. Unleashing creativity like a wild tornado, **vision** is a seed of expectancy, transforming dreams into reality. It is the bridge that connects faith to the future, bridging the gap between what is and what will be. **Vision** gives us something worth praying for, fueling our prayers with purpose and intensity.

But **vision** doesn't stop there! It shatters the limits of our thinking, raising the ceiling of possibilities higher than ever before. It's the antidote to apathy, providing us with a clear destination, preventing us from getting stuck in the rut of the "same old, same old." When we embrace **vision**, we soar above the mundane, the mediocre, and the "maintenance" mentality. **Vision** erases indifference. It takes us far away from the comfort of familiarity and propels us towards extraordinary achievements.

If our aim is to accomplish great things for God, **A COMPELLING VISION IS A MUST!**

The Hebrew word for 'vision' is Chazon (cha-zohn)

It means: "A prophetic vision, dream, oracle, revelation; especially the kind of revelation that comes through sight."

Chazon is a reminder of our primary statement ... **"If I can see it, I can achieve it!"** Spiritual vision provides us a vital glimpse of all the limitless possibilities.

Gehazi was haunted by a different kind of blindness. In the physical, he had the ability to see, but he lacked "possibility" vision. It has been said, **"eyes that look are common, but eyes that see are rare."** Gehazi accepted things at face value, never looking beyond the problem to consider God's intervention. He saw only the Syrian army and embraced defeat.

A Gehazi condition means you keep trying to solve things at a level you can see! It's a type of blindness that accepts circumstances without exploring the potential for divine intervention. While sight is a function of the eyes, vision is a function of the heart! It's time to expand our horizons, to step out of the confines of a small house and embrace a bigger world. Let's not be defeated by what we see, but be driven by the vision that resides within us.

NO LIGHT ... NO SIGHT

I play golf, but I don't play at night. There is a simple and sensible reason for this, I can't see in the dark. Golfing in the dark would be disastrous. It would mean ramming trees and running into ponds with golf carts. Without being able to see the green, people would have no idea in which direction to hit the ball. Imagine how many people would get beamed by a flying ball!

Natural vision thrives in light. In the dark, sight is greatly diminished. That's why we embrace light instead of darkness. Why stumble in the darkness when you can run in the light?

Mehmet Murat ildan wrote, *"More windows, less darkness; less darkness, more vision; more vision, more wisdom!"*

Illustration: Have a volunteer come forward and hand them three darts. Distance yourself from the volunteer by about ten paces. Hold the dart board in front of you and ask the volunteer to PUT the dart into the bullseye. The word 'put' is used, not 'throw,' since you don't want the dart to be thrown at you. If the volunteer starts to throw, stop them, and emphasize that the dart needs to be placed in the bullseye. Ideally, you want them to place the dart in the bullseye by walking over to it. Explain to the student the importance of thinking differently once the exercise has been completed. You should remind them that the volunteer threw the dart the way they have always seen it done. Students should be encouraged to think outside the box.

The volunteer should now step back and repeat it. You will blindfold him/her and spin him/her this time. While he/she spins, send the dart board back to the other side of the room. The volunteer will move toward your voice only to find that the board has moved. Share the following thoughts after the volunteer returns to his/her seat.

IT'S VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HIT A TARGET YOU CAN'T SEE

Every church without a vision is blind! Every ministry without a vision is blind! Every leader without a vision is blind! Every person without a vision is blind! You have an idea of where you want to go and what you want to achieve, but without a clear vision, you'll wander aimlessly and never reach your destination.

On the contrary, when you have a vision, it's like turning the light on! It's that moment when hazy becomes clear. The haze dissipates and you can now SEE the target. And once you can see it, you can focus on it with all your energy and determination. All you need is a target. You need something to take aim at. Something to point to. Something to point others to. Henry David Thoreau said, *"In the long run men hit only what they aim at."*^[5]

The Lord spoke to Habakkuk, emphasizing the importance of a clearly defined vision (target).

Write down this vision. Write it clearly on tablets, so that anyone who reads it may run.

(Habakkuk 2:2 VOICE)

Understanding is the key for Habakkuk to capture that vision and it's crucial to. By embracing our vision and sharing it with others, we create a ripple effect that inspires and empowers those around us. Let your vision be the guiding light that brings clarity and purpose to your life!

But here's the deal: vision is worthless if people don't know what they're looking at. If you don't grasp and understand your vision, whether it be personal or corporate, you'll NEVER achieve it, let alone pass it on to others.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF GOD VISION!

Let's dive into the captivating concept of 'God Vision' as revealed in **2 Kings 6:8-10**. Bob Logan set the table when he wrote, *"A God vision is right for the times, right for the church, and right for the people. A God vision promotes faith rather than fear. A God vision motivates people to action. A God vision requires risk-taking. A God vision glorifies God, not people."*

A friend once asked me, *"Man of God, what is the Lord telling you today?"* It wrecked me because I was not attuned enough to God to provide an authentic answer. When I do not possess something, I cannot give it away to others.

God Vision is not hypothesis, it's real. God communicates with humanity and reveals His very thought and truth through 'divine revelation.' It's a word from God for a purpose, time, place,

or people. It means that God 'shows' someone His will. The unveiling takes place in two ways: through the Logos, the written word of God, and the Rhema, the spoken word of God.

Ask for divine revelation as you read God's written Word. The Holy Spirit will speak to you supernaturally as you read, imparting truth, and illuminating certain parts of the text.

Ask for ***"ears to hear what the Spirit is saying."*** You can hear God's voice today through prayer, dreams, wise counsel, and the word of knowledge. Additionally, he speaks through the five-fold ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

Sam Matthews gives great insight into the five-fold ministry gifts: *"The apostle lives with leaders; the prophet lives with God; the evangelist lives with the lost; the pastor lives with the people; and the teacher lives with the word."*^[6]

In **2 Kings 6:8-10** we find two components of a God Vision:

1. Divine Insight: Seeing Beyond the Ordinary

"Now the King of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants saying, my camp will be in such and such a place. And the man of God sent to the King of Israel, saying, beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there." Verses 8-9

Carl Jung said, *"Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes."*^[7]

A supernatural awakening had taken place in Elisha. Prophetically, he could see things. We can call it the advantage of sight. We too need spiritual sight if we are to make a meaningful impact on those in our spheres of influence. To help our peers cope with what they've been going through, we must give them a NOW word.

Check out **1 Corinthians 2:12**. ***"Now we have received...the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."*** Rick Renner wrote, *"Verse 12 emphatically states that the Holy Spirit is sent by God to remove our blinders so we can SEE and KNOW what we need to see and know!"*^[8]

I want to SEE and KNOW God's vision for my life, marriage, kids, education, career, finances, relationships, and faith! If I ask, the Holy Spirit will give me clear answers to the various challenges I face.

Syria's king huddled with his team to discuss their next move. When they tried to execute the planned attack, the Israelis were always ready for them. Syria's plans were intercepted. Their conversations seemed to be being monitored by Elisha, as if he was in the huddle. Elisha was equipped with crucial information by divine revelation to provide his king.

That's what a God vision can do for you! It takes your natural vision and skyrockets it to a whole new level.

Don't get me wrong, natural vision is great and all. It helps us navigate our potential, connections, and resources. But a divine vision? Now we're talking! It knows no bounds. It taps into God's unlimited potential and resources. In other words, with a God vision, anything is possible! Those who embrace this kind of vision live with an exhilarating sense of expectancy. They're always on the lookout for God to do something extraordinary.

STORY: Jimmy Looks Beyond the Ordinary

It started like so many evenings. Mom and Dad at home and Jimmy playing after dinner. Mom and Dad were absorbed with jobs and did not notice the time. It was a full moon and some of the light seeped through the windows. Then Mom glanced at the clock. "Jimmy, it's time to go to bed. Go up now and I'll come and settle you later." Unlike usual, Jimmy went straight upstairs to his room. An hour or so later his mother came up to check if all was well, and to her astonishment found that her son was staring quietly out of his window at the moonlit scenery. "What are you doing, Jimmy?" "I'm looking at the moon, Mommy." "Well, it's time to go to bed now." As one reluctant boy settled down, he said, "Mommy, you know one day I'm going to walk on the moon." Who could have known that the boy in whom the dream was planted that night would survive a near fatal motorbike crash which broke almost every bone in his body, and would bring to fruition this dream 32 years later when James Irwin stepped on the moon's surface, just one of the 12 representatives of the human race to have done so? - Bill Hybels, *Who You Are When No One's Looking*, IVP, 1987, p. 35. ^[9]

2. Clear Direction: Moving Forward with Confidence

"Then the King of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice." Verse 10

Dr. Miles Monroe puts it perfectly when he says, *"Vision focuses on thinking ahead rather than dwelling on or seeking to replicate the past."* It's not about retracing your steps; it's about forging ahead to uncharted territories and gaining what you've never had before.

When Elisha needed it most, God provided him with clear direction. A God vision is like having a GPS that guides you to places you've never been before. However, it often unfolds gradually, like a series of waves. As the Syrian army shifted from one location to another, Elisha received step-by-step guidance from God. During this divine process, Elisha understood the importance of maintaining a constant flow of communication with his heavenly source.

Sometimes, we expect God to reveal His entire vision to us in one sitting. We want the whole feast at once, the big reveal. But God gives us direction precisely when we need it. So, get into the habit of going back to Him, seeking further guidance. George Barna reminds us that, *"His (God's) vision for you is a precious commodity that only He can impart."*

When God unveils a clear vision to a leader, everything changes. It's like a series of falling dominoes. According to Bill Hybels, progression consists of two crucial steps.

First, the leader catches sight of the vision.

They see that life-altering image of the future that makes their heart race with excitement. When they witness a form of ministry or service that sparks an undeniable internal response, they can't help but say, *"I think I could dedicate my life to this. Maybe I was born for this!"* At some point, a leader sees the vision that God intends them to see.

Then, almost immediately, the feeling of the vision follows.

The vision becomes a captivating picture of the future that ignites passion within. It sets the heart pounding and the mind racing. **What picture does that to you? ***

*** Slideshow:** Create a PowerPoint slide for each passion igniter and show the picture that correlates with the passions mentioned below. Feel free to add your own passions.

- Is it the image of hungry children being fed or serving on a mission's team to bring the light of Christ to a dark land?
- Or perhaps the picture of homeless individuals finding shelter, or abused women discovering a safe place?
- How about an orphaned child finding a loving place to live or rescuing those being victimized by human traffickers?
- Does the thought of serving cancer patients, or leading people to a life of faith bring a lump to your throat?
- Is it the picture of children learning about Jesus, or teaching a group of young people what it looks like to be on fire for God?
- Maybe it's assisting the elderly or ministering to those confined to prison that brings tears to your eyes?

There are countless passion-inducing images, and each leader has their own. What makes a vision so potent? It's not just the image of the future; it's the energy and passion it awakens deep within one's heart. And when we receive clear guidance, watch out!

Divine insight and clear direction - these are two advantages of having vision from God. Ready to let God unleash His vision in your life? Keep your eyes open and your heart tuned in. Incredible things are on the horizon!

ASSIGNMENT

Take two items with specific purposes and give them a new, unexpected purpose. Bring those items, together with a written explanation, when we meet next week.

Resource Credits

1. Opportunity is a State-of-Mind | Blog - Barbara Patterson.
2. "Equality Reflected at This Earth of Mankind Novel By Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1975): A Marxist Approach." 2015
3. Joyce Meyer - Quotespedia.org.
4. Messerer, Chris. "Visionary Differences." 2019
5. Meet Kaleigh Miller, Blue & White Society Executive Board Member - Penn State World Campus Blog.
6. Blog | The Well of Maryville.
7. Light Middle Way.
8. Divine Revelation | Renner Ministries.
9. Bill Hybels, *Who You Are When No One's Looking*, IVP, 1987, p. 35.
10. John Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You*, 1993, p. 126