

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Proverbs 29:18**.
- B. This morning I want us to see the importance of looking ahead.
- C. Those that live in the past are going to repeat it. We need to be people who worry about today and look to better things in the future.
- D. We plan in so many ways in our life because we have vision as to what we want to become:
 - 1. A little boy wants to grow up and be an astronaut.
 - 2. A little girl wants to be a movie star or model.
 - 3. We want to have a retirement, a house on the lake, etc.AND THIS IS VISION FOR THE FUTURE!
- E. We need this same kind of vision for the church.

I. THE VISION OF ELISHA.

- A. Scripture text: **2Kgs. 6:8-17**.
- B. The king of Syria wants to set up camp in Israel. But as he counsels with his servants Elisha knows his thoughts. Elisha sends word of the king's plans to Israel and the place is secured for Israel.
- C. When Syria finds out Elisha is the "troublemaker" they send a large army of troops to Dothan and surround the city.
- D. Elisha's servant gets upset with such a large contingent but Elisha prays for vision for the servant.
- E. The servant then goes out and looks to the mountains and sees horses and chariots of fire from God (2Kgs. 6:17).
- F. My prayer, the elders' prayer is that each member of the Sunnyside "family" will have that kind of vision. To see the greatness and the power of God work and become available to us.

II. THE VISION OF MORDECAI.

- A. Scripture text: **Esther 4:7, 14**.
- B. The wicked Haman has plotted against the Jews--to kill them all, Esther is their only hope.
- C. Queen Vashti insulted King Ahasuerus and the king went about finding a new wife and queen. Esther was chosen.
- D. Mordecai would not bow down and pay homage to King Ahasuerus and because of this came the "death blow" to the Jews.
- E. Mordecai then tells Esther of the vision she needed. "Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for a time such as this?"
- F. We need that same challenge today. We have a part to play in the future of this congregation. Are we going to seize the opportunity?

III. THE VISION OF HAGGAI.

- A. Scripture text: **Haggai 1:3-4, 5, 7-9**.
- B. Haggai had a message-build the temple!
- C. The old men saw the foundation of the new temple and cried. The young men saw the same and had great joy. (This temple was much smaller than Solomon's). Solomon's temple used 183,000 laborers and skilled craftsmen working 7 years. Clinton power plant \$4-5 billion; the temple at a wage rate of \$15.00/ hr. = \$38.4 Billion at \$25/ hr. = \$64 Billion).
- D. But Haggai told them to have great courage and that the glory of the latter will be greater than the former.
- E. We need to have this vision for the church. To know that the future has greater glory waiting than does our past memories no matter how good they be.

IV. BUT WE NEED YET ANOTHER KIND OF VISION.

- A. As thrilling and exciting as these stories are, we yet need another kind of vision.
- B. The vision, as used in the Scriptures, means revelation from God. We need that kind of vision too!
- C. See the following verses:
 - 1. Ezekiel 7:26; Jeremiah 18:18.
These show the relationships/functions of the priest, prophet, and wise men.
(Ezek 7:26) 'Disaster will come upon disaster, and rumor will be *added* to rumor; then they will seek a vision from a prophet, but the law will be lost from the priest and counsel from the elders.
(Jer. 18:18) Then they said, "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely the law is not going to be lost to the priest, nor counsel to the sage, nor the *divine* word to the prophet! Come on and let us strike at him with *our* tongue, and let us give no heed to any of his words."
 - 2. Proverbs 29:18.
Even the context of our theme verse shows that vision has to do with the Law of God.
Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, But happy is he who keeps the law.
 - 3. Lamentations 2:9.
The prophets have nothing to say because there is no vision from the Lord.
Her gates have sunk into the ground, He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the nations; The law is no more; Also, her prophets find No vision from the LORD.
 - 4. Jeremiah 14:14; 23:16.
God talks about men prophesying falsely when there has been no vision from Him.
(Jer. 14:14) Then the LORD said to me, "The prophets are prophesying falsehood in My name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them; they are prophesying to you a false vision, divination, futility and the deception of their own minds.
(Jer. 23:16) Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the LORD.
 - 5. 2Samuel 7:4-17.
Nathan receives the word of God in a vision concerning the dynasty of King David that will ultimately lead to Christ.
- D. To receive vision every day from God we must read His word. We need this vision to be able to live lives that will be wholesome and true. Lives that are acceptable to God.
- E. Without vision (the word of God), we will (spiritually) perish!

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Without vision the people perish:
 - 1. The servant of Elisha would have perished without a vision,
 - 2. The Jews might have perished without a vision from Mordecai.
 - 3. The temple would have perished without a vision from Haggai.
- B. The conclusion is that the church will perish without a vision of what the future can be.
- C. Let's take the blinders off and begin to look with our eyes at how great we can become with the Lord's help.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.