

# I Was Not Disobedient to the Heavenly Vision

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Pro 29:18 KJV Where there is no vision, the people **perish**: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

- PERISH = unfortunate translation because we think of something dying
- PERISH – the word is used in these scriptures - means “to loosen”
  - Pro 1:25 ESV because you have **ignored** all my counsel and would have none of my reproof,
  - Exo 5:4 ESV But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you **take the people away** from their work? Get back to your burdens."

## Other Translations of Prov 29:18 (vision is the same as a word from the LORD)

- Pro 29:18 NIV Where there is **no revelation**, people **cast off restraint**; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.
- Pro 29:18 ESV Where there is **no prophetic vision** the people **cast off restraint**, but blessed is he who keeps the law.
- Nah 1:1 A **prophecy** concerning Nineveh. The **book of the vision** of Nahum the Elkoshite.
- Oba 1:1 The **vision** of Obadiah. This is **what the Sovereign LORD says** about Edom-
- Mic 1:1 The **word of the LORD that came** to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah--**the vision he saw** concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

## Where there **Is Vision** people are ‘engaged’

### Three elements of vision

1. **GOD SPEAKS - revelation, prophetic vision - - Somehow His purpose is revealed**
2. **This revelation CONNECTS to the HEART**
3. **I respond, I become ENGAGED**

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## Introduction

- The Jews were wanting to execute Paul
- They took him to Festus - Paul appealed to Caesar
- They took him to King Agrippa

Act 26:1-23 ESV So Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense: 2 "I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am going to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 especially because you are familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews. Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

## Paul was zealous for God - on a good career path you might say

4 "My manner of life **from my youth**, spent from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem, **is known by all the Jews**. 5 They **have known for a long time**, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest party of our religion **I have lived as a Pharisee**. 6 And now I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers, 7 to which **our twelve tribes hope to attain**, as they earnestly worship night and day. And **for this hope I am accused** by Jews, O king! 8 **Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?**

- Gal 1:14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so **extremely zealous was I for the traditions** of my fathers.

- Act 22:3 ESV "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, **educated at the feet of Gamaliel** according to the **strict manner of the law** of our fathers, **being zealous for God** as all of you are this day.
- Php 3:5-6 ESV circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 **as to zeal, a persecutor** of the church; **as to righteousness under the law, blameless.**

### He was equally zealous to persecute the church

9 "I myself was **convinced** that I **ought to do** many things in **opposing** the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only **locked up many** of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but **when they were put to death I cast my vote against them.** 11 And I **punished** them often in all the synagogues and **tried to make them blaspheme**, and in **raging fury** against them, I **persecuted them even to foreign cities.** 12 "In this connection I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.

### Until the day He met Jesus - everything changed

13 At midday, O king, **I saw on the way a light from heaven**, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, **I heard a voice** saying to me in the Hebrew language, '**Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?** It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 And I said, '**Who are you, Lord?**' And the Lord said, '**I am Jesus** whom you are persecuting.

### The Vision - the revelation

16 But rise and stand upon your feet, for **I have appeared to you for this purpose**, to **appoint** you as a **servant** and **witness** to the things in which **you have seen me** and to those in which **I will appear to you**, 17 **delivering you** from your people and from the Gentiles--**to whom I am sending you** 18 to **open their eyes**, so that they may **turn from darkness to light** and **from the power of Satan to God**, that they may **receive forgiveness of sins** and **a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.**'

### Paul was immediately "Captured" by the vision of Christ

19 "Therefore, O King Agrippa, **I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision**, 20 but declared first to those in **Damascus**, then in **Jerusalem** and **throughout all the region of Judea**, and also to the **Gentiles**, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance. 21 For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 **To this day I have had the help that comes from God**, and **so I stand here testifying** both to small and great, saying **nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass**: 23 that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

### **Three keys - when your heart is captured by the vision of Christ**

- **Immediate radical obedience**
  - Acts 9:19-20 ESV ... For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. 20 **And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues**, saying, "He is the Son of God."
- **Dependence upon God** - carrying out the vision would be greater than his ability
- **Commitment to Scripture**

## The Heavenly Vision

Gal 1:11-18 ESV For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. 12 For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

### **Lifted him above the sins of his former life**

- 13 For you have heard of my **former life** in Judaism, **how I persecuted** the church of God **violently and tried to destroy it**.

### **Moved him to consider his achievements as a zealous Pharisee as dung - to gain Christ was all He desired**

- 14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.
- Php 3:4-8 ESV though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. 7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. **For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ**

### **Helped him to recognize God had a purpose for him BEFORE he was born**

- 15 But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, 16 was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles

## One brief moment, a heavenly vision - a revelation from God captured the heart of Paul, changed the course of his life, and the course of the world - and he did not shrink back from it even in the face of execution

- God has a purpose for the world
- God wants to engage us as a partner to carry out his purpose
- Have you heard his voice - his revelation? If not - go into a mode of listening prayer
- If you have heard - what holds you back?
  - Your past failures? - Vision can rise above that
  - Your current achievements? - Vision can put it into its proper perspective
- **Are we willing to count it all loss to gain Christ - this is what VISION will do for you**