



# WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

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## Visions and Prophecy.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## **Visions and Prophecy.**

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### **Topics.**

- The Hebrew and Greek meaning of vision.
- Visions and reality.
- Visions and prophecy.
- Bible prophecy and present tense.

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### **THE HEBREW AND GREEK MEANING OF VISION**

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**Vision:** in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word (mar'eh) and means a view (the act of seeing); also, an appearance (the thing seen), whether (real) a shape or a mental vision.

**Vision:** in the New Testament comes from the Greek word (optasia) (optanomai) and means visuality, (i.e. an apparition) to gaze at with wide-open eyes, as at something remarkable.

The word vision when used in the Bible carries the idea of gazing or staring at something by sight or as a vision especially a supernatural spectacle and wonder. It means to see or experience by sight or by a vision something appearing and can relate to a spectacle gazed at by the eyes or the perceiving of the mind. By implication it carries the idea of perceiving and understanding clearly or mentally something that others don't and interpret it in a particular way and take action accordingly.

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### **VISIONS AND REALITY**

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Visions can relate to a spectacle gazed at by the eyes or a movie played out in the mind. In most cases God gives the picture or vision then the prophet speaks or writes it in their own words. Since many of these biblical visions, events or experiences often appear as real events to the person experiencing them, they can be spoken of in the following two ways:

1. As an actual and real event.
2. As a vision (an image or mental experience within the mind).

The person having the vision maybe left in confusion as to whether it was a vision or an actual event. This is because many biblical visions appear so real the emotions and the body respond as though it is an actual real event, even though it may simply be playing out in vivid colour and crystal-clear pictures on the imagination of the mind. The reason for this is that the human nervous system does not have a mind of its own and therefore cannot discern the difference between a real picture being played out on the imagination of the mind or an imaginary one so the nervous system responds to both the real image and the imaginary image in the same manner. This is why in many chapters the same event is written as a real experience in some verses and as a vision in others since the biblical character is not always sure what they actually experienced. (2 Cor. 12:1-3). Paul when speaking of himself in the third person said:

- I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows and I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. (2 Cor. 12:1-3).

Jesus took Peter, James and John up a mountain and he was not only transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light, but Moses and Elijah also appeared to them. This event was so real that Peter asked Jesus if he should make a tent for the Lord and one for Moses and one for Elijah, yet as they were walking back down the mountain Jesus told Peter, James and John not to tell this vision to anyone. (Matt. 17:1-9). A biblical vision is always under God's control and can appear as a movie played out on the screen of the imagination of the mind (like a dream) or it may appear as a hologram appearing in the air that is seen by the eyes of the prophet or to whoever God chooses to give the vision to. The vision communicates the LORD'S will or future events to the prophet or to whoever God chooses to give the vision to and they then proceed to tell the vision to the people, sometimes in their own words and at other times in the exact words the LORD has spoken to them in the vision.

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## VISIONS AND PROPHECY

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A key to understanding many prophecies of the Bible is to know that the verses are not always written in chronological order. It is almost as though the prophet is so inspired that he immediately speaks the words as they come to him. They are then recorded in the order that the prophet spoke them, but that does not always mean they are in the actual chronological order that they will unfold throughout history. Sometimes the latter verses of a chapter may actually be the first events to take place in God's foreordained plan of events. In the book of Revelation this principle applies not only to the individual verses of the chapters but also to many of the chapters themselves.

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## BIBLE PROPHECY AND PRESENT TENSE

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Often a prophecy is spoken in the present tense as though the event has already happened when in actual reality the fulfilment of it may still be many years away, following are four reasons for this:

1. The prophet is seeing the vision in the present moment and speaks it as he sees it in present time. The people the prophet is speaking to know when the prophecy is a future event, but sometimes it can be difficult for those reading it thousands of years later to realise, because of the tense it is written in.
2. When a prophet speaks, he is speaking as the voice of God, therefore the words he speaks are guaranteed to come to pass. This is another reason the prophet can speak the words of God in the present moment because they are certain to happen at the right time in the future.
3. Though the prophet is speaking the words of God or the vision as they come to him in his time, he may not always be aware of the future echoes contained in the prophecy.
4. Though what the prophet is speaking has a local application for the people of his generation there may also be contained within the prophecy a future message that has the spiritual ability to transcend time and travel thousands of years through history to a future age or a future person which the prophet himself is not aware of since his focus is the people of his generation. The following verses are a good example of prophecy proclaiming a future event being spoken in the present tense:
  - The prophet Joel prophesied: "A nation (Babylon) has come up against my land (Judah), powerful and beyond number; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness. It has laid waste my vine and splintered my fig tree; it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down; their branches are made white (Joel 1:6-7).

This event has not taken place, yet Joel speaks it in the past tense as though it has already happened. This is simply because Joel is speaking what he is seeing happening in his vision. God is giving Joel a complete picture in his mind of what is about to take place in the future. Joel in a sense is watching a movie being played out in his mind and is simply speaking it out as the events take place, thus the reason Joel speaks in the past tense. In his mind the events have already taken place, but in real life they are still to be played out in the future.

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