

## Edgar Buckley - The Heavenly Vision

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I would like to begin by bringing the Christian love and greetings of the dear ones from Shalott. The Shalott Ecclesia from Jackson Ecclesia there for all who have been left behind.

I'd like also to say that we're sorry to hear that brother Kwisiak had a slight accident. We trust death and we're all work out for the glory of God.

It seems when we left this morning that one thing after another was wrong. I said, let's go this way. This time maybe it'd be shorter. It turns out that it was longer. So we got past Gary and we thought, now here we will surely make time.

And once again we found ourselves going in search. So once we were in Gary once more, it seems that by some reason or other, Jefferson street, when you hit it once, you come in on 12, it comes to a dead end. You get beyond that and there's another one, and so on and so forth. So we asked, how do we get there? He said, take Broadway out so far.

And that we did. 36th street, he said, you get there and then cut over to Jefferson. About the time that we crossed the bridge up here, I was beginning to wonder we really were going to make it or not in time. You see, we had to be here on time. So lo and behold, before our eyes was a sign.

And it said, Gary Students Bible convention. It was a vision indeed. You didn't have to worry anymore. We were here, and how precious indeed it is to see the Dear brethren.

I think that some of us during this week we have talked with perhaps our neighbor or our fellow worker, someone who asked us, what are we going to do this weekend? And we said, we're going to a convention, and they said, ah, we rejoice with you, sure you will have lots of fun. But then we said, a Bible student convention. The smile left their face and they said, oh, they feel that a convention is something that you have fun at, that you can eat, drink and be merry.

They know not of a Bible student convention. What goes on there? What do they do there? Well, we think the words of the poet are very good along this very line, and we're talking about you brethren who are gathered here, all of us.

Behold how they gather from east and from west, from north and from south they come no visible emblem, nor banners are theirs, nor loud rolling beat of the drum. But with faces alight with the hope which is theirs, with the love which sustains and the promise which cheers, they herald the kingdom to come unknown to the world, as their head Was unknown and willingly sharing his cross, believing the kingdom long promised is near. Our parting from all earthly loss has lost. The sun, fast arising, now gladdens their eyes, and just within reach seems the rich cherished prize for which they count all else but lost. Yes, here they assemble, these uncrowned kings on the master's business in Kent, all humbly and meekly pursuing their way in his service willingly spent.

And the world knows not, as they knew him not what honors are theirs, who are serving their king, and full on his mission are men.

Now we believe that we all have seen a heavenly vision, and again we believe. The poet put the words very beautifully. He says, the beautiful vision of glory has caught our enraptured gaze. It is thrilling our hearts with gladness and filling our mouth with praise to see the truth in its grandeur, all fresh with the dews of grace and sparkling in the infinite glory with beams from the holy place.

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The heavenly bishops. Now, in considering this vision, let us first go back into time, journeying back some 1900 years. 1900 years and some 8000 miles distance to the eastward, to the land of Palestine, and there, on a hot, dusty road, we see some men who are journeying toward Damascus. They are fully intent upon something, but when they arrive, they may persecute they who are of the sect called Christians.

When suddenly there appeared a great light above the brightness of noonday, and they all fell to their face, and this one man in particular, he said, I was trembling and exceedingly astonished, and then a voice was heard. But only this one man knew what that voice said, and it called him by name, and it said, saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

For it is hard to kick against the bricks. This man, as we know, when he arose, he could not see for the glory of that light in seeing no man. But he heard that vision, and he asked, lord, what wilt thou have me to do? That brings us to our theme text and the testimony of this man, who we know is Paul.

Acts the 26th chapter. In the 19th first Paul made this testimony concerning the vision we have described. He said unto Agrippa, who was a king, for whom he was witnessing before, and in bonds of that he says, whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.

Now let us examine for a moment this 26th chapter of Acts. Consider this witness of Paul and how this ties in with our description of the heavenly vision, what it means to us. Let us go back to the ninth verse. This is before Paul, seeing the vision on the way to Damascus. The reasons why he's talking to King Agrippa.

In the ninth verse, he says, I verily thought with myself. I thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which thing I also did in Jerusalem. Now, what was this? The he said, and many of the saints did. I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests.

And when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. I approved of it. He heard the voices of those who were against the Christian, the saints of God.

And I punished them oft in every synagogue and compelled them to blasphemy, and being exceedingly mad against them, I was very angry. I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon, as I went Damascus with authority and commission, I had the authority so to do from the chief. The chief priests.

And then he tells us of the vision. He says, at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven above, the brightness of the sun shining round about me and them which journeyed with me, and when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me. Now we want to point out here he saw the vision. Now he hears a voice, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, saw Saul, why persecutest thou me?

It is hard for thee to kick against the priest. Here was the divine Christ that he had seen, and yet Christ says that you are persecuting me. Well, how is this possible? Because he was persecuting they who were followers of the Master.

Who were the master? Paul said, who art thou, Lord? And he Jesus said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. But arise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose. Now

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he's giving him a commission to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee.

Now again, get the picture. He sees the vision, he hears the voice, he receives a commission. Here is the commission to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Then Paul's testimony, he says, whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. He gave me this commission and I obeyed.

Now he tells of how he did obey, 20th verse. But showed first unto them of Damascus and at Jerusalem and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do works meet for repentance. Now he's going to tell the results of carrying out the commission given him for these causes. The Jews caught me in the temple and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, Lysias had helped him, but he gives the glory to God.

He said, having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day to carry out that commission to obey the vision, witnessing both to small and great saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, and now the truth is, he gives it that Christ should suffer and that he should be first that should rise from the dead and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles, and as he thus spake for himself, Paul and his witness, Festus, who is sitting here. Paul was talking to King Agrippa, but here was Festus, who brought him before the king. He was just sitting there and listening.

But now he speaks. Festus said with a loud voice, so often hear, Paul, thou art beside thyself. Thou art out of their mind. Much learning doth make thee mad. You don't know what you're talking about.

To use our modern language, Festus is saying you are crazy.

But he said, that is Paul. I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and sober. This is the truth. For the king knoweth of these things before whom also I speak freely, for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him. He knows about them.

For this thing was not done in a corner. It was done open in a bulkboard so all could see it. King Agrippa, he's speaking now to the king again. Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

He didn't wait for the king to answer.

I know thou believest, and then Agrippa said something, a very astonishing thing. He said unto Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. Paul in his commission was carrying it out so well that this king and his honors and all that he had still Paul had almost persuaded him to become a Christian, and Paul's answer was, Paul said, I would to God that not only thou the king, but also all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as I am a Christian, except for one thing.

These bonds, which I would not that anybody have bonds by any means, but I wish they would almost all together become Christians. Now, Paul, having seen that vision, surely obeyed it.

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Now These things we want again to point out to you. Paul saw the vision. He heard the voice. He received the commission which he said he obeyed, and having obeyed it, he suffered.

We know he suffered many things, and nevertheless he did so because he desired to do so. He said he was persuaded. So now we. Not as Paul, we follow the same line. Now.

Before we came into the truth, we were undone. Now we were not as Paul. We didn't go about persecuting anyone by any means. But nevertheless. Nevertheless, we were unrighteous.

And as we look back on those days before the truth was revealed unto us, we heard many voices that said many things. We have to admit, for the most part they were the voices of confusion, frustration and foolishness. We saw visions of the fulfillment of our own hopes, our aims and our ambition. We were wrapped up in our own desires. Yet as we looked around us, we could not help but hear the voices of sorrow and weeping.

See the vision of sin, sickness, pain and death which daily was described to us in the newspaper. We heard it over the radio. We see it in the television. Pictures of destruction, scenes of tragedy that filled our hearts with a feeling that somewhere, somehow, there must be something better than this.

And then one day we saw evasion. We heard a voice. Now, it wasn't just any vision. It wasn't just any voice at all. But we would say that it was the heavenly vision.

The vision of glory and the voice of joy. We saw Christ in His church. We saw the glory of God. We saw our own imperfection. We saw the world, eventual salvation through Christ.

We had a vision, much as the vision that Isaiah had. In the sixth chapter of Isaiah the first ten verses, let us consider them for a moment in harmony with our thoughts on the heavenly vision.

Isaiah says, in the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim. Each one had six wings with twain, that is, with two he covered his face, and with twain again, two he covered his feet, and with twain he did flock, and one cried unto another and said, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. So now, as we consider for a moment this vision as Isaiah described it, he said, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne. We would say, the great white throne. He was high and lifted up.

And he said, his train filled the temple, and we would say, that was Christ's church, and he said there were six seraphim there. There were two with six wings each, and they covered his face, so I didn't see his face.

And there were two that covered his feet, and a seraphim on each side which feed his lie, and he said in the voice that I heard, the post moved of it, it was so great. This was his vision. Now we have seen the Lord high and lifted up, and we would like to point out that in this first verse, as I said, I also saw the Lord.

That is Adonai. Jesus, you will note, have an O, L and then the small ord which signifies Adonai and thus referring to Jesus. Now we know this is so because we read in the 12th chapter of John, Christ tells us that Isaiah saw my glory, and here is where he is seeing it, and yet we go down to

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the third verse and the one who cried unto another, saying, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. He's talking about Jehovah now, not Jesus, but rather Jesus as the messenger of the covenant.

So we, as we see this heavenly vision, we see Christ high and lifted up.

Now, in the fifth verse, Isaiah said, then said, I, woe is me.

He noted himself now, after seeing this great vision. For I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Why? For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

I have seen the glory of God, and now I see my own imperfections. Lips denote communication, and Paul said that any who sinned not with his lips the same as a perfect mask, and none of us are perfect, we all admit it, and we, as we have seen the Lord high and lifted up, we see our own uncleanness, that we are undone, and we do stink.

Woe is me.

Now, in the eighth, seventh, sixth verse. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth and said, lo, this has touched thy lip, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin hurt. Now, as we would consider this matter, Goliath hole denotes heat and warmth, a cleansing agent.

He takes it from this altar, which we would say would be the ransom sacrifice.

And thus the blood of Jesus has cleansed us, so that our iniquity is taken away and our sins purged.

Now we had to be cleansed before we could have a commission, before we could receive it. For the eighth verse says, also I Heard the voice of the Lord. Now again, Adonai Jesus, saying, whom shall I send? And who will go for us? Who will carry out this commission?

Then said I, here I am. Send me, and when we have seen the heavenly vision, we indeed have consecrated our all unto draw.

And the Lord said, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their ears and hear, see with their eyes. Excuse me, I'm getting mixed up. Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and convert and be healed. Now tradition says that Isaiah was sawn asunder for delivering this message.

Now the message we have is glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. But how many will hear? How many will understand, understand? Most will not. Indeed, they accept not the truth.

But we still have the commission, and we desire to carry it out as a result of the heavenly vision which we have seen. Now, if we will note in the sixth chapter and in the fifth verse, Isaiah says as much as we say. Then said I, woe is me, for we have seen this vision, and that is the voice of confession. In the seventh verse of this sixth chapter, the angel, he said, lo, as he went to get this pole, this live coal.

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Now that is the voice of cleansing, and then in the ninth verse we have the Lord who said, go and tell. Now this is the voice of commission.

So as Paul, so also with us. We have seen a vision, the vision, they haven't a vision. We've heard the voice which we believe to be the voice of joy, and we have received the commission to go and tell these glad tidings. Now then, the question is with us.

Are we obedient unto the heavenly vision?

To see Christ was a vision of height. To see ourselves in comparison with a vision of.

Before we came into the truth, before we seen this heavenly vision, we were three people. The person we thought we were, the person others thought we were, and the person God knew we were. Before the truth that entered our lie, we did not feel undone. We would accuse others and excuse ourselves. We would say, she is touchy.

My irritability is just a case of nerve. He is stubborn. I have conviction, she is proud. I have superior taste. Ah, we were accusing others and excusing ourselves.

We were not essentially bad. We didn't persecute anybody, no. But rather we done these little things that were not right as much as anything. We were fault finding. Just finding fault with people.

And perhaps you remember the story of the three fault finders. There was the fool and the justice man and the wise man. Someone gave them each a crystal, and the fool, he took his crystal and he made a magnifying glass out of it, and every time he saw someone doing something wrong, he'd find fault with it. He magnified, because he looked through this crystal and it just looked that those balls were so much bigger than they really were.

And he spent all his time doing that. The just man, he made a window out of his crystal, and when he would see someone else doing something wrong, he'd find fault with it. He was just about it. Oh, the man done wrong, and he should be punished for it.

But he said, let the punishment fit the crime. But the wise man, with his crystal, he made a mirror out of it, and then he looked in that mirror, he saw the faults of others. It was reflected back to him, and he saw himself, and he gained their bond.

Now we thank God that we have seen a vision of the Lord's holiness and use the mirror of truth to reflect the faults of others back to us so that we can see ourselves, thereby seeking daily cleansing from our faults and blemishes, thus letting love take the place of bitterness, hearing the voice of comfort and seeing the vision of Calvary.

Instead of finding fault with the world and its problem, we are now more concerned about telling them of a bright and better day, pointing out that through Christ are these things possible. Preaching Christ and him crucified, we go forth with the voice of joy ringing in our ears. We have the heavenly vision, the vision of glory before us. We see Christ sitting on the right hand of the throne of God. We see Peter and Paul and James and John.

There's Brother Russell also, and all the dear departed. Yes, and the poet, denoting this very thing, he says in this convention that we're in, and who shall say that they met there alone, that is, at the convention that we are now attending? For were there not forms more fair of those who have heard

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their masters well done, rejoicing with him in the air, invisible, yet our dim eyes cannot see, still hovering o'er us, their presence may be, and we shall soon be with them there. Ah, yes, they may indeed be present at this very time with us.

And what does the hymn say? It says, he will keep me till the river rolls its waters at my feet, Then he'll bear me safely over where the loved ones I shall meet by reason of the glory that excelleth we count all else but loss and wrong. We will suffer, we said we would. We will suffer the loss of all things that we might win Christ. Now let our souls on wings sublime rise from the trivial cares of time Draw back the parting veil and see the glories of eternity.

Ah, that heavenly vision.

Now if we've had anyone at any time has said to us that you are so heavenly minded that you are of no earthly youth. If they have, we have great cause to rejoice because we are expanding spiritually, spiritual expansion. We are setting more and more our affection upon things above and that is our desire, and as we do, of course, we become of less use as far as earthlings are concerned, they who are of the earth.

And we stand upon Pisgah's mountain of faith and focus on eternity. This telescope of God's truth is used to behold the glories of the ages to come. If we desire to be a part of such a glorious future, we must follow the formula that was followed by Paul, by Christ, by all the dear ones who were faithful unto death. We must have faith in God's precious promises. That is the voice of joy.

We must be obedient to the heavenly vision. We must be patient in long suffering, waiting for God to do time. We must have love for God, truth and righteousness, love for suffering. Humanity have the ability to see afar off, yea, way down the stream of time. Over a thousand years from now we have heard this voice of joy and we have seen this vision of glory, this heavenly vision.

We've dedicated our lives to what most people would call merely a voice and a vision. Someday to us it will be a grand reality.

And we, as we said, have dedicated our lives to this very cause.

Now it is absolutely necessary that we bear witness of the truth. It is absolutely necessary we suffer with Christ. It is absolutely necessary we develop perfect love. It is absolutely necessary we be faithful unto death and the word absolute that's as strong as it is possible to make the word absolute, at least in some dictionaries, if it's used as a noun, it means the power of God.

Now the scripture which we believe shows the power of God, the absolute of God so Well is Ephesians 1, 18 and 19, the eyes of your understanding, being enlightened in seeing this heavenly vision, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance and the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us war, who believe according to the working of of his mighty power, the absolute of God we are marching to Zion Beautiful, beautiful Zion we are marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of our God. We have seen the heavenly vision even as Paul we have heard the voice of joy. We have received the commission to go and tell and we ask ourselves, are we obedient? Thereunto we know it will bring suffering we are told of that very thing.

The fourth ends his description of these conventions in which we gather at because we have seen this heavenly vision, we want to come together to talk of these things and have fellowship one with

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another of like precious faith. The party says full soon shall that greatest convention be held, the faithful ones all to be there Our Master presiding in glorious gar and we in his glory to share there highly exalted to sit in his throne to lift up the billions down crowding so long oh what it must be to be there, and we all surely look to that time when we will gather together in that greatest convention. May the Lord add His blessing as what is going to say.

We can certainly echo the thankfulness of our Heavenly Father for making this vision known to us from among all the peoples of this world. This vision by no means is obscure to us, as we know that we do love the Lord and He has made all things plain unto us. Now we will use hymn number 179 to close this meeting, after which we will have a short intermission. We will reconvene at 11:15, a rather short intermission, so we would advise the friends not to wander too far. Restrooms we might inform the friends are at the north end of the hall.

We might also add that classes are in session today and that we might observe as much silence as we can so that we do not disturb those who are in classes. However, tomorrow we intend to have the main auditorium, and we will be in the building by ourselves tomorrow. So let us use him number 179 close.

I hear the how can I keep from Jesus?

Lord, my savior is S.A.

my eyes may stretch my heart upon the earth.

Our dearly beloved Father and Heaven, we bow before Thee in thanksgiving, thanking Thee that Thou hast been with us in this convention, that we might indeed have fellowship one with another and consider these things. Yes, this heavenly vision which has opened before our eyes, and which we certainly desire to obey, we thank Thee for all that Thou hast done for us, ask that Thou would be with us through the convention, that Thou would be with each speaker, that his words might be unto us and blessings to all that Thou wouldst be with us that we speak those things which are pleasing to thee that we go forth to Thy glory and thank thee for all these things that Thou hast given us. We ask our blessed Gary class in their efforts to put on this convention. We thank thee for these things and to journey to that greatest convention of all that we might indeed be found faithful and be there and see thee and thy Son and to behold those things that we long for that we might help the peoples of earth. We thank thee for these things as we further wait before thee and Jesus Christ, precious name.

Amen.

It Very good. They were coming. I knew where they were coming from. Delivery very good.