

Dreams and Visions
Revelation Ch 212 v 1-7

Over the last twelve months we have thought about 'dreams and visions' in several different ways. We have discovered that God talked to his many different prophets through dreams and visions and we have discussed our dreams and visions for the future of our planet and for the future of our church. In the October Paper I pointed out that throughout the Bible, be it in the Old or New Testament, each dream or vision carried a similar format – that of teaching and instruction followed by a need for action. *'Your old men will have dreams and your young men will have visions. Your sons and daughters will proclaim my message.'* Act now sons and daughters before it is too late!

Last month this action was suggested in the form of mission/vision plans for our congregations. Much action can come from these plans so try to pursue them if you can.

The Bible is so cleverly woven together. It is not made up in order to fit together, but wonderfully follows God's vision for the future of his creation and all who are part of it. It starts in a garden and ends in a city that is like a garden paradise. It starts in the Garden of Eden and ends... well, you tell me! His vision is so hard to grasp. God's action is *'Behold, I make everything new'* said God. *'It is done'*. Theology scholars, who take pleasure in dissecting the Bible word for word, are not agreed as to whether the old things will be renewed or completely destroyed in order to usher in the 'New Creation' but I'm sure that they are in no doubt that the visionary city which John writes about in Revelation is too amazing to comprehend. He uses language that his readers would understand – foundations and walls but these refer to the permanence and protection of God in his city. He **will** be there **living in the peoples** of that city. There will be no need for sun or moon because God will be their light. Just as the church today is not its buildings but its people, the eternal city will be its faithful and true people. As for water, there will be only one river flowing from God the one and only source of all purity and, unlike in the Garden of Eden, all will have access to the tree of life.

As I write this paper the lectionary reading for the week refers to Paul's missionary journey to Macedonia. Paul had a vision following which he set sail for Greece, as we now know it, and on reaching Philippi he met Lydia, a rich merchant trading in expensive purple dyes. She became Europe's first convert to Christianity! She welcomed Paul and his friends into her home and they stayed with her. Remember last month's paper talked about the Great Commission (go and make disciples of all nations). Here is Paul doing just that. In all the letters to the early Christian congregations we read hospitality is an important part. A Christian home is one with an ever open door. Remember, in order to put our Mission Plans into action let our MWA Circles and our church buildings always be 'open doors' to all who would enter. It only takes one person like Lydia to hear the 'Good News' and pass it on to those around them. Remember the hymn – 'It only takes a spark to get a fire going'! This year's theme has been a good one and there are many more visions and dreams that we have not addressed – biblical and non biblical. It could form the basis for a Bible Study Course in your congregation. It is now time to look forward to our new theme for 2022-2023 – **A Time for Everything**. Enjoy the summer!

For Discussion

1. Discuss what you think John is describing as 'The Holy City' in Revelation.
2. Can you think of one person to act as Lydia for you?