



[1 Samuel 3:1](#)

(1) And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

[Proverbs 29:18](#)

(18) Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

King James Version

This takes place among God's covenant people, those who should have known [God](#) and were ready to do His will. But the Word of God was rare in those days, as this takes place during the period of the judges when every man did what was right in his own eyes ([Judges 21:25](#)). The people were not submitting to what they knew of God and His purpose.

The word *vision* means "revelation," suggesting that one's attitude toward what God has revealed to him will determine what his life will produce. The book of Judges exposes the people's attitudes toward God's revelation to them through the prophets and judges God sent to them. Since they did not have a good attitude toward what He had revealed, the Word of God was rare.

The same word, "vision," appears in [Proverbs 29:18](#), "Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint." *The Living Bible* gives a more accurate sense: "Where there is ignorance of God, the people run wild." This does not mean that the people run around like madmen but that they move through their lives without direction or purpose.

[1 Samuel 3:1](#) and [Proverbs 29:18](#) come from different settings. One is in the setting of God's covenant people—people who should have known—and the other describes people who are unconverted. What happens to the one, though, is the same as what happens to the other: The people live aimless, purposeless, fruitless lives.

At this point, the attitude, the understanding, becomes so important. Since we Christians are also a covenant people, our attitudes toward what God has given us is vital to using our calling properly. Inherent to God's revealed will is that blessings will come, as represented by the word "happy" mentioned at the end of [Proverbs 29:18](#): "Happy is he who keeps the law."

Do we believe that God has given us a revelation? If so, what is our attitude toward it? The answers to these questions are so important that their value cannot be over-estimated. We need this revelation to have a sense of direction and well-being about life.

The times we live in are oppressive and depressive, and it is easy to allow them to give us a sense of hopelessness. However, we have God's revelation of the mystery of life! We possess the most valuable knowledge that can be given to human beings regardless of their stations in life. We were not behind the door when God handed out the gifts! He gave them to us, bypassing the high achievers, the great, the mighty of [this world](#) ([1 Corinthians 1:26](#)). God has called few of them. Instead, He called those who thought they were behind the door and hidden from His view (verses 27-28).

We have what would make everybody's life complete—including the high achievers, the rich and famous, the powerful and intelligent—because it would give them the proper guidance to channel their gifts into something truly useful. We have not been short-changed. Whereas they may be rich in power, intelligence, prestige, fame, social influence, and money, we are rich in what really matters regarding life and its purpose.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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