

### 13 Dreams & Visions

Dreams and visions are a long-neglected part of spiritual communication from heaven. We admire Daniel, applaud his courage and his convictions but often forget that at one scary moment in history, his ability to hear what God was saying in a dream was all that stood between he and his friends' certain death. What can you learn from your dreams?

God often spoke to people in Scripture and history by dream to get across an idea difficult to describe in any other way. Of course, not all dreams come from God.

Many are just normal brain-play at rest. Some dreams can also come from the demonic world and some come from too much pizza! Yet everyone dreams and God can and has used the dream.

A vision differs only one basic way from a dream; the vision can occur when the person is wide awake and not sleeping. A dream or vision from God is implanted or inspired by the Holy Spirit and can only be interpreted by Him. Like Daniel's dream it requires a revelation of the Lord.

**How can you tell if a dream or vision is from God? Use the following tests from Youth Aflame as a rough guide.**

**If the dream is an authentic speaking of God it will be:**

- (a) Very realistic, like an actual scene of life. A sense of import and value fills it.
- (b) Usually short, not ramble or confused. Clearly defined in purpose or sequence.
- (c) Definite impression made for certain action left in the mind on awakening.
- (d) Person awakens feeling closer to God, refreshed, awed or challenged.
- (e) Leaves person awakened to God's claims (Acts 26:19; 10:19 16:10)
- (f) Visions: Easily distinguished from physical world on which it is superimposed.
- (g) Visions: Are NEVER given by God in mentally NON-ACTIVE conditions (e.g.) under hypnosis, the disorientating effects of hallucinogenic drugs, other self-induced trances, high energy music, yoga, or other Eastern disciplines, transcendental meditation, occult or spiritist conditions).
- (h) Never recurring suggestions for occult secrets or promises of power; not sensually arousing to attitudes of hatred or fear; not depressing, deadening, confusing.

If you want to develop your spiritual sensitivity to the dream to open it as another avenue through which the Lord can teach you, follow these suggestions:

- (a) Be serious with Him. Expect Him to speak to you His own time and own way.
- (b) Learn the discipline of silence during your day to cultivate your spirit.
- (c) Learn how to fall asleep with your mind filled with thoughts of God. Prayer and praise, Bible-reading just before bed will help.
- (d) If you have a dream you believe comes from God WRITE IT OUT the instant you wake up. Do not delay. Write it in as much detail as you can.

(e) Think deeply about the dream. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your imagination around it. Often your dream is symbolic and can give you deep insights.

(f) If you like discuss your dream with a spiritual, considerate friend. Some comment may give you the very key that unlocks the whole thing for you.

(g) The importance of the dream in guidance is three-fold, Firstly, our whole beings are relaxed in sleep and not occupied by secular concerns. Secondly, God by His Spirit can have direct access to our spiritual nature with our entire inner being focused on what He is showing us. Thirdly, He can show us in symbols what we would never normally see. Our minds during sleep can lucidly see simple things, placing them in proper context, analyzing, evaluating and marveling at them. God can preview a decision for us by a dream so we know what to do when we wake up. (I Kings 3:5-15)

**Notice in Genesis chapter 1 when God created everything.** First God saw in Himself what was to be. Then the Holy Spirit hovered over the thing that needed to be made whole (the formless and void earth). Then God spoke, and it happened. What happened? What He was thinking in His vision. God always calls those things that be not as if they already were. That is how He creates. He sees a vision, puts the Holy Spirit to work along with the Word. Hebrews 11:1 says that faith is the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen. Hope is the blueprint or the vision of what is going to be in the future, and faith is the seed that has the power to manifest that vision.

**We are in the image of God! What does it mean?** We have a common operating system that God has. Computers have difference operating systems, and usually one program designed for DOS will not work for Macintosh, and another will not work for Windows. But we have the same operating system as God.

Sometimes we do not understand the nature of the natural and spiritual worlds and therefore we do not understand the human being's importance and even our own value to God and to mankind.

### **How does God do things?**

Genesis 1:1-3 Creation: God the Father had the inner image, the Holy Spirit went geographically to where the problem was, and The Son spoke the Word. The Holy Spirit obeyed the Word and did the creative work. It took confusion and darkness and brought light and order. God said it was good.

Mark 11:20-24: The power of words: words are seeds that carry an image called hope or imagination.

First the inner image called hope, then the words, then the Spirit obeys.

Genesis 1:21- 25 He brought forth animals after their own kind. They multiplied to be like their fathers. Verse 26 God said to make man after our own image, likeness, like God. They were capable of having imagination, and speaking words which had dominion. It was their instruction to go to The Word of God (Tree of Life) and hear God speak, then repeat what they had heard in the earth, and that would be the way that they would have control, dominion over the earth. This plan also allowed God to be in control of things.

However this was a voluntary submission. Being created like God gave man the ability to choose like no other animal. Satan knew this; he also knew that he had not been given authority like this. So he devised a plan to obtain this authority over God's creation, the earth and everything in it.

## **God went about getting a new family He used the same principal**

Abraham: He told Abram to go look at and count the stars. Then he renamed Abram to Abraham which literally means the father of many nations. He renamed Sarai to Sarah which means the princess of a family of people. These were two people who in the natural were beyond child bearing age who could not have a family; they were about 75 years old when God first put the vision in them. About 25 years later, after looking at stars and hearing the words "Father and Princess" their inner image changed, and Isaac was born. God's purpose here was to create a new family called Hebrews or Israelites in order to eventually bring His own Son Jesus into the earth through them as a Savior.

## **Jacob's vision**

Jacob was Abraham's grandson and it was up to him to keep the new race going. Jacob fell in love with his uncle's daughter Rachel. But uncle Laban was a bigger con artist than Jacob and had Jacob work for him for seven years in order to earn Rachel in marriage. Jacob kept Laban's cattle and sheep and did a good job. Laban made Jacob marry his other daughter Leah. He said if he would work another seven years he could have Rachel. Jacob did and he got Rachel. The problem was that Laban and his daughters were idolaters and God wanted to change Jacob and free him.

God had a plan however, and He gave Jacob a dream and a vision. He showed Jacob in a dream that all the rams and cattle had stripes and spots. Gen 31:11-12. Well when Laban in 30:27 asked Jacob to stay and keep his cattle, Jacob remembered the dream and made a deal with Laban. He said that he would keep the cattle for no wages, for free, but that his pay would be all the striped and spotted ram and cattle that were born. He further agreed that he would start with only solid colored animals, and that the spotted and striped ones would be removed from his flock. It sounded impossible; that the solid cattle would bear striped cattle. So Laban agreed.

So Jacob took rods of green poplar (Gen 30:37) and made spots and stripes on them. Then he set these rods before the flocks at the watering troughs so that when they would come to drink they would see these stripes and spots. Gen 30:39 says that the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle striped, and spotted. Jacob did not put the feeble cattle before the rods, and they bore weak solid colored cattle, which belonged to Laban. The strong striped cattle belonged to Jacob.

Jacob became rich. The Lord sent him away back to his land to fulfill his destiny. (Genesis 30:43). And the man increased **exceedingly**, and had many flocks, and maidservants, and male servants, and camels, and asses. Jacob's name changed to Israel: From trickster to contender for God.

## **Joseph's dreams: His dreams and words kept the family going.**

Genesis 37:5-11. And Joseph dreamed a dream and told it to his brothers. And they hated him still more. And he said to them, I pray you, Hear this dream which I have dreamed. For behold! We were binding sheaves in the middle of the field, and lo, my

sheaf arose and also stood upright. And behold, your sheaves stood around and bowed down to my sheaf. And his brothers said to him, Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have the rule over us? And they hated him still more for his dreams and for his words. And he dreamed still another dream, and told it to his brothers. And he said, Behold, I have dreamed another dream. And behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowed down to me. And he told it to his father and to his brothers. And his father rebuked him and said to him, What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I, and your mother, and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the earth before you? And his brothers were jealous of him. But his father observed the saying. This dream of Joseph's actually got God's people delivered in later years, and fulfilled God's purposes.

**So often however, as with Joseph and Jacob, a dream and a vision brings pain and pressure.**

God usually gives us visions and dreams, and then orders our life in unusual circumstances so that our character is shaped to fit the dream. Sometimes this takes years.

**Moses with the serpent on the bronze pole.  
A vision of the future Cross.**

Nu.21:8 And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

**(John 3:14-16).But even as Moses lifted up the serpent** in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

When the Israelites in the wilderness were dying from the fierce bites of the serpents (a picture of Satan biting us), God's remedy was to have them stare at a serpent on the brass pole. Jesus tells us that this was a picture of Him on the Cross. But Jesus was not a serpent you might say. True, but He was made sin for us. (2 Corinthians 5:21). For He has made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Staring at the snake on the cross has worked for me in my deepest time of great pressure and pain. All I could think about was, "no matter what things look like, Jesus took all my penalty for everything; nothing was left out!". God has always worked things out for me!!!