

DREAMS AND VISIONS

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Are dreams and visions from the Lord, or are they just a figment of the imagination? Does God speak to people at this time by dreams and visions, or is it just a phenomenon of the past that He did when He was writing the Scriptures?

There is a fundamentalist theology that says that God gave dreams and visions to people while He was writing the Scriptures, but since Jesus came there are no more dreams and visions of God. They say that every dream and vision that a person has in this day is either of the devil or due to some psychological disorder. We know that drugs can make people hallucinate, but eating too much pizza can also give you a nightmare. This, however, would not stop anyone from eating pizza; therefore, we cannot discard dreams just because there are agents that can induce bad ones.

We are a people who believe that the Bible is the written Word of God and that it reveals Christ in both the Old and New Testaments. Because this is so, we must turn to the Word of God for the answers to these questions.

All through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, men have been called of God, instructed of God, and directed and admonished of God through dreams and visions, therefore there is no doubt that dreams and visions played an important part in the dealings of God with humanity. If we should approach this subject scientifically, then we could apply the process of analysis in order to find evidence of continuity in human behavior.

(1) ABRAHAM (Genesis 12): Here we find Abraham having a vision in which God makes a covenant with him. Verse 4 records, "*Abraham departed as the LORD had spoken to him.*"

(2) ABIMELECH (Genesis 20:3): God came to him in a dream to warn him not to touch Sarah, Abraham's wife. Therefore, God speaks also to the ungodly in dreams.

(3) JACOB (Genesis 31:11): God speaks to Jacob in a dream concerning the evil of his uncle Laban and how he might get his rightful wages from Laban.

This is a dream concerning mundane matters.

(4) JOSEPH (Genesis 37:5): Joseph's dream tells him of the future for his life, and how he would become ruler in Egypt. This dream eventually saved hundreds of thousands of lives, if not millions, as he built warehouses and stored grain for seven years against a seven-year famine, which is recorded in history.

(5) GIDEON (Judges 7:13-15): God showed him victory in battle by a dream.

(6) SOLOMON (1 Kings 3): A man of great wisdom, education, and intelligence dreamed a dream and made a covenant with God, which he broke, but God kept.

(7) JOSEPH, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:20): God spoke to him in a dream that he should take Mary as his wife, and again in a later dream spoke to him to take the young child Jesus and flee to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod.

(8) ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL, DANIEL, and ALL THE PROPHETS were dreamers and visionaries. They had dreams and visions that affect our lives to this day. In Daniel 2, God gave Daniel to know the king's dream and its meaning. This dream concerning the great image, was one which spoke of the forming of the *Church* as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and showed that at the end of time the stone would strike the ten toes of the image and destroy it. This of course means that at least some of us will receive the fullness of Christ and bring judgment on the world kingdoms that now occupy the place where the kingdom of God should be.

The evidence, here presented from historical Scripture, reveals that there is a built-in capacity in man that makes him have visions and dreams. It could never be dubbed as chance by even the most cynical observer. Among humans the incidence is too widespread and recurrent to be classified as chance, therefore we must conclude that it is a biological trait among humans. Some psychologists even contend that dogs and other animals have the capacity to dream.

EVIDENCE FROM THE WORD OF GOD

The Word of God is immutable, therefore what it says is beyond conjecture. Let us, therefore, examine what the Bible says about dreams and visions, and whether it would be something that will last through the whole of human history,

or was it just for a time.

Numbers 12:5-6 “And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And He said. HEAR NOW MY WORDS: IF THERE BE A PROPHET AMONG YOU, I THE LORD WILL MAKE MYSELF KNOWN UNTO HIM IN A VISION, AND WILL SPEAK UNTO HIM IN A DREAM.”

This is very clear and very plain; God here lays down the law of His dealings with man. In this there is nothing to misunderstand.

Job 33:14-16 “FOR GOD SPEAKETH ONCE, YEA TWICE, YET MAN PERCEIVETH IT NOT. IN A DREAM, IN A VISION OF THE NIGHT, WHEN DEEP SLEEP FALLETH UPON MEN, IN SLUMBERINGS UPON THE BED; THEN HE OPENETH THE EARS OF MAN AND SEALETH THEIR INSTRUCTION.”

Job is testifying to the Word of God exactly as the Lord gave it to Moses.

Ecclesiastes 5:3 “FOR A DREAM COMETH THROUGH THE MULTITUDE OF BUSINESS; AND A FOOL’S VOICE IS KNOWN BY THE MULTITUDE OF WORDS.”

Ecclesiastes 5:7 “FOR IN THE MULTITUDE OF DREAMS AND MANY WORDS THERE ARE ALSO DIVERS VANITIES: BUT FEAR THOU GOD.”

THERE ARE THREE TYPES OF DREAMS:

- (1) DREAMS FROM GOD,
- (2) DREAMS FROM THE DEVIL, AND
- (3) DREAMS FROM THE MULTITUDE OF BUSINESS; DREAMS FROM THE MIND.

These factors make dreams and visions to be dangerous things upon which to base one’s life. God, therefore, appoints a trusted ministry—the five-fold ministry (*apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers*)—through whom He continuously gives direct instructions to His Body. We can well see why some of the churches reject dreams and visions, for they will destroy a congregation if the leaders are not led of the Spirit of God. Satan does indeed drop in one here and there and confuses the brethren, and with or without Satan’s help, brethren who have bad thoughts against each other will come up with some very heavy blows against any congregation.

In order to understand dreams or visions, one must understand that God

will not give a dream or vision to destroy His people or to come against another. The basic work of God-given visions or dreams is to edify, instruct, or admonish the Body. Everything else should be discarded.

Joel 2:28 "AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS AFTERWARD, THAT I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS, YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS."

This passage in Joel spoke of the "*former rain*" and the "*latter rain*." The "*former rain*" refers to the falling of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost in the beginning of the Gospel, and the "*latter rain*" refers to the falling of the Holy Ghost in the end of the age. We can clearly see in this passage that the Word is saying that the Holy Ghost will fall in a greater outpouring in the latter time (in the time of harvest) than it was at Pentecost. WE SEE THEN THAT THIS SCRIPTURE DOES NOT PUT ANY TIME LIMITATION ON THE DREAMING OF DREAMS AND THE SEEING OF VISIONS, BUT RATHER IT CLEARLY STATES THAT OLD MEN AND YOUNG MEN ALIKE WILL SEE VISIONS AND DREAMS. IT IS ALSO VERY CLEAR FROM THE TEXT AND CONTEXT OF THIS SCRIPTURE PASSAGE THAT GOD WILL POUR OUT HIS SPIRIT UPON WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN, YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE, AND THIS WILL BE THE CAUSE OF THE DREAMS AND VISIONS. IF WE DO NOT BELIEVE DREAMS AND VISIONS, WE DO NOT FULLY BELIEVE THE WORD OF GOD, AND OUR GOSPEL IS SHORT OF BASIC TRUTH.

In this month's issue, we are going to give you some very important dreams and visions, not from Daniel or Isaiah, but from some of us with whom God has been dealing for many decades.

We will first give you a dream "The Glory Train", from Brother Tom Campbell, dated August 3, 1994, and the interpretation that the Lord gave him.

