

Visions, Dreams & Revelations

Unveiling The Supernatural Realm

and vicious laugh I had ever heard in my life, and one that I never wish to hear ever again! I couldn't see Satan, and neither did he utter any words. All I could hear was a long and continuous laugh, that I thought was never-ending. There was no pause. I will never forget his maniacal laughter, because it was real, clear, and vivid. According to the scriptures, Satan and his demons can express emotions, such as great wrath (intense anger) (*Rev 12:12*), and fear (*Jas 2:19*). God used this auditory vision to make me aware of the existence of evil in the spiritual realm, but most importantly, as a warning—to always remain cautious and vigilant in my life and ministry (*1 Pet 5:8*). Two of Satan's schemes are deception (*Rev 12:9*), and hindrance (*1 Thes 2:18*). He may use both human and demonic agents to carry out his schemes (which we must never be ignorant of - *2 Cor 2:11; Eph 6:10-18*), and make it seem that our labor in the Lord is futile. Since God's true Church is doing a powerful work in the world, in the time of the end, Satan may attempt to hinder or distract us from fulfilling our mission and work for God, as happened with the apostle Paul, who experienced great opposition in his ministry (*1 Cor 16:9*), and was hindered by Satan (*1 Thes 2:17-18*).

Furthermore, in the Book of Daniel, there was an angelic spirit being, who mentioned that God sent him the moment Daniel began to humble himself and pray for understanding (very likely the archangel Gabriel) (*Dan 8:15-17; 9:21; 10:12*). The angel travelling in the spiritual or heavenly realm, took a few weeks to reach Daniel the prophet, from God's throne! There was a delay in the answering of Daniel's prayers. But why? God's message would've been delivered by the archangel Gabriel, instantly after he received it, but was unable, of himself, to get past the 'prince of the kingdom of Persia!' It took the power of another one of God's holy angels, Michael ("the great prince which standeth" over the people of God) (*Dan 12:1*), the archangel (*Jude 1:9*), to help him fight and finally overcome this opposing demon exercising influence over the Persian realm, and deliver God's message. Then Gabriel returned to fight the "prince of Persia," and another opposing demonic force, called "the prince of Greece." (*Dan 10:12-14, 18-21*). But, no matter how many schemes or agents Satan uses, there is nothing he, nor anyone else can ever do to stop God's will from being accomplished here on earth! We learn from these scriptures that we must persist in prayer, and never procrastinate, or become disheartened, because there may be a delay in the granting of our requests, in this ongoing battle that is being waged in the heavenly realms! I've also received a glimpse from the Lord, in the form of an auditory vision, of this extremely powerful battle between angels and demons, which was loud, continuous, swift, fierce and intense. It sounded like a lot was happening in the short space of time I heard it. This is how it was portrayed to me. God made it known to me that there is a very real and endless battle!

God will open doors of opportunity for the gospel message to be preached throughout the world, regardless of opposition! (*2 Cor 2:12*). Not to convert the entire world, but as a witness, or testimony to the nations—to demonstrate the truth and fulfillment of God's word! (*Mt 24:14*). The destiny and calling of God's faithful and zealous servants will be fulfilled, and our work rewarded (*Mt 25:20-21; Mk 10:29-30; Lk 19:15-17; 1 Cor 15:57-58; Heb 11:26; 2 Jn 1:8*). Furthermore, our eternal inheritance is assured—the saints of the Most High will receive an everlasting Kingdom, that no one can take away from us! (*Dan 7:18, 27*). The fulfillment of our destiny and blessings are appointed by God (*1 Cor 2:9*). His timing is always perfect. He removes all obstacles and makes our plans succeed. He can do far above and beyond our highest hopes, thoughts, dreams, and expectations! (*Pr 16:3; Mt 19:26; Lk 1:37; Eph 3:20-21*). We will bear fruit only when we abide in Christ. Without Him we can do nothing! (*Jn 15:5, 7-8*). God will encourage us to keep sowing good seeds, and He will provide us with everything we need to do just that, and we must never give up! (*2 Cor 9:6-15; Gal 6:6-7*).

The auditory vision unveiling Satan in the spiritual realm, greatly helped me in my relationship and walk with God, including my persistence, motivation and determination to seek and draw closer to Him, and have remained close ever since. I'm eternally grateful to God, that He has protected me, so I can serve Him to this very day (*Is 54:17; Jn 17:15; 2 Thes 3:3*). Nothing can separate us from God's love! (*Rom 8:31, 37-39*).

Scriptural References:

Genesis 28:10-17
Genesis 31:10-13, 24
Genesis 37:1-11
Genesis 41:1-36
2 Kings 17:13
Psalm 89:19
Proverbs 29:18
Isaiah 8:19-22
Jeremiah 23:16-17, 25-32
Ezekiel 13:16-17
Daniel 1:17
Daniel 2
Daniel 4:1-28
Habakkuk 2:2-3
Luke 24:22-23
Acts 10:19-20, 28

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What does the Bible say about visions and dreams? What are the different types of visions? Does God use visions and dreams to communicate specific messages today, as He did in times past? If so, why and what kinds of messages does He communicate?

According to Webster's International Dictionary, the definition of a dream is: "a series of thoughts, images, or emotions occurring during sleep," and a vision is: "something seen otherwise than by natural sight - prophetic sight."

It's important to realize that visions and dreams can come from mainly three different sources: God; Satan; or our natural sleeping state. [Note: Satan is not always the source of all bad dreams. Sometimes, God will use bad dreams, to startle someone in order to get that person's attention, if he/she has not listened to, or paid attention to Him, either through dullness of hearing, or simply rejecting God's will for his/her life. In this case, the person may experience an unpleasant dream, due to unheeding and disobeying God's will (Job 33:14-18). In Gen 20:3 king Abimelech experienced a frightening dream, and God said that he was "a dead man" for taking another man's wife. Abimelech was so terrified by the dream, that in addition to returning Sarah to Abraham, he also loaded them with riches, as a form of apology (V 14-16)].

God spoke in different ways, including visions and dreams, in times past (Num 12:6; Heb 1:1). But we must also be vigilant against Satan and his demons, who attempt to deceive through false prophets and teachers (1 Jn 4:1; Jude 1:8). Occult activities and sexually explicit materials are a way that Satan may gain entry into people's lives and attack their minds through dreams. Therefore, some dreams may be deceptive and false, which are prophesied by false prophets and diviners, and lead people astray (Jer 14:14; 23:16-22, 25-27, 31-32; Zech 10:2). [Note: Attempting to seek knowledge, information and guidance from such sources is strictly forbidden - (Dt 13:1-5; 18:9-14), because God has provided true prophets for these purposes (Dt 18:15-22), and Jesus the Messiah, in the NT to send warnings (Jn 4:25-26; 6:14; Acts 3:22-23, 26)]. This is why we must always test the spirits, to see whether a prophet is true or false (1 Jn 4:1-6). A true prophet is filled with the Holy Spirit and speaks messages from God (2 Pet 1:20-21); and a false prophet speaks under the influence of evil spirits (1 Jn 4:1, 3, 5). Jesus warned us to be vigilant, because many false prophets will deceive many people (Mt 7:15; 24:11). Apostles Paul (1 Tim 4:1-2), Peter (2 Pet 2:1-3), and John (2 Jn 1:7-11) also caution us. We will know the difference between true and false prophets by their fruit bearing—deeds, actions and way of life (Mt 7:15-20).

Other dreams are part of the natural sleeping state, which are described in the Bible as fleeting (Is 29:8), or occur as a result of "much activity" (Ecc 5:3), implying that normal dreams are a natural consequence of the stimuli we receive when we are awake. For example, the collection of people's ideas, thoughts and images coming from various sources, such as television, magazines, or the internet. This is why, it's crucial that we guard what we expose our minds to, because occult, violent, or sexually immoral material, can cause unwanted dreams. We must avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Th 5:22), and not give the devil a foothold in our lives (Eph 4:27; 1 Pet 5:8-9). We are to always think pure, lovely, clean and wholesome thoughts (Php 4:8). God promises peace and a restful, good night's sleep to those He loves, and whose minds are fixed on Him (Ps 4:8; 127:2; Is 26:3). Given that we live holy lives, in submission to God's will, and have clean minds (Rom 12:1-2), a safe, healthy and comfortable environment, we are much more likely to know whether God is the source of our visions or dreams, if we experience them. Now we can delve deeper into visions, dreams and revelations, and the ones that come from God.

Visions, dreams and revelations: Firstly, God lives in unapproachable light, and no one can see Him and live (Jn 1:18; 1 Tim 6:16). Therefore, people did not see the fullness of God's glory (Ex 24:10; 33:20). In the OT, for example, God manifested in the: cloud (Ex 16:10), tabernacle of the congregation (Num 14:10), or tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud (Dt 31:15). Furthermore, God spoke to the prophets through revelatory visions and dreams (Num 12:6; Hos 12:10). A personal vision or dream is one that is meant for God's people, and usually comes with a specific warning (Mt 2:12-15); and a prophetic vision or dream is for the church, and usually communicates a message or warning for the body of Christ—true believers (Acts 9:10-16; 18:9-11). Visions may be experienced in the form of auditory visions, or visual visions. God may choose to speak through images, words, or a combination of the two. Visions can happen in the day, or at night (Job 33:15; Dan 8:26; Acts 16:9; 18:9). Furthermore, some were overwhelmed by the visions they experienced. For example, Eliphaz (Job 4:12-21), the prophet Isaiah (Is 21:2-4), and Daniel the prophet (Dan 8:15-19, 27; 10:15-17).

Types of visions:

1) Auditory vision - A form of direct divine communication, such as hearing a supernatural voice, either from the angelic or demonic realm. This type of vision is typically clear and vivid. Perceived as coming from the supernatural realm, and outside oneself. The voice or sound may be as soft as a whisper, or a very loud commanding voice. Other examples may include: an angel singing a very high note, a musical instrument playing, or even a battle between angels and demons. Occasionally, auditory visions may include a visual component, such as seeing angels singing, or speaking in your "mind's eye," while hearing their voices at the same time. [Note: Even though God may not speak words directly to us with loud audible voice, as He did in times past (Exo 20:1-17; Deut 4:11-13); we still hear His voice through thunder, lightning, and waters (Exo 20:18-21; 2 Sam 22:14; Job 37:2, 4-5; Ps 18:13; 29:3-4; 77:18); or in visions (Gen 46:2; Acts 18:9-10), if He chooses to reveal Himself to us].

2) Visual vision - may be a straightforward image, or series of swiftly changing pictures or images that require interpretation. Along with the vision, God will also provide an interpretation (Daniel 8:15-17), and grant us "spiritual wisdom and understanding," when we seek Him prayerfully (Col 1:9; Jas 1:5). Although God speaks His will mainly to believers through visions, He may also use visions for the purpose of calling and converting unbelievers.

i) "open vision" - Very clear and vivid. May be dramatic to very dramatic. Prompts the participation of the believer who receives them. The one who sees this type of vision actually engages in the unfolding screenplay. Unlike closed visions, the believer gets to talk and occasionally act in it. The believer can see into the supernatural realm with eyes wide open, and the vision occurring directly in front of them. An example is found in Acts 10:3-8, where Cornelius experienced an open vision, in which an angel of the Lord spoke concerning Peter. Another example is when the angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias and told him that he and his wife Elisabeth were going to have a son (Lk 1:12-23).

ii) "closed vision" - Typically presented to the waking, conscious mind through pictures or images. In other words, the believer is simply watching and receiving the vision (an image of someone or something flashing instantly), or "picture in their mind's eye," rather than talking or acting within the vision, but he is completely conscious of his physical environment. God communicates to us knowledge and information in our thoughts, through the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16; 15:26; 16:13-15).

iii) Trance - In a trance, the believer becomes disengaged from the physical realm. In the Old Testament, the word "trance" is not used in the original writings, therefore it is italicized (Num 24:4,16). But occasionally, the term "trance" found in the New Testament is equivalent to the "deep sleep" referred to in the Old Testament (Gen 15:12). In the Greek, the word "trance" is 'ekstasis,' which is equivalent to the word 'ecstasy,' in English. In Mark 5:42 and Luke 5:26, the Greek word is translated as "astonishment" or "amazement" (Mk 16:8; Acts 3:10). According to the Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, the term "trance," is defined as "a condition in which ordinary consciousness and the perception of natural circumstances were withheld, and the soul was susceptible only to the vision imparted by God." The person's preternatural, absorbed state of mind prepares him for the reception of the vision. Examples include: the apostle Paul who fell into a trance, while he was praying in the temple (Acts 22:17-21), and on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-9). He also received visions and revelations from the Lord, where he was caught up to third heaven (2 Cor 12:1-4), and was speaking in the 3rd person. This was obviously a heavenly vision, as no one has gone up to heaven, only the Son of God (Jn 3:13). Peter experienced such trances too (Acts 10:9-17; 11:4-10). Peter's consciousness was heightened through a trance, so he could receive divine revelation from God. It was not Peter's own dream or imagination. But God produced a state of mind in order to communicate with him. Other examples include: the apostle John who was "in the spirit," which means he was under the control of the Holy Spirit, and put in a trance or trance-like state, when he received the visions described in Rev 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10.

How did God communicate His messages in the Old and New Testaments? Examples include: **1) By Jesus His Son, and through the Holy Spirit, to the prophets** (Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:20-21). **2) Supernatural acts, such as miracles, signs and wonders, to display His power among the people** (Ex 9:14-16; Ps 77:14), and confirm the gospel message in the NT (Heb 2:4). **3) Audible voice** (Ex 3:4-5, 14-15), and authenticated Jesus as the Son of God in the NT (Mt 3:16-17). **4) Visions and dreams** (Job 33:14-18), through which He made Himself known to the prophets (Num 12:6). **God spoke through visions and dreams, to both servants and kings, as recorded in His word.** Examples include: Abram (Gen 15:1); Jacob (Gen 46:2); Isaiah (Is 1:1-4); Ezekiel (Ez 1:1); Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 4:4-5); Daniel (Dan 7:1-3, 15); Obadiah (Obad 1:1); Nahum (Nah 1:1); Joseph (Mt 1:20-25); Peter, James and John (Mt 17:1-13); Ananias (Acts 9:10-16); Cornelius, where an angel of God appeared to him in a revelatory vision (not a dream or trance) during prayer (Acts 10:1-8); Apostle Paul (Acts 16:9-10; 18:9-11); and John (Rev 9:17-19). **5) A "still small voice,"** as occurred after Elijah won a dramatic victory over the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20-40; 19:12). **6) Manifestations.** God also communicates through manifestations, as occurred on the day of Pentecost, where God's spirit was poured out and accompanied by special miracles, including a rushing mighty wind which came from heaven (audible), fire (visual) signs, and believers speaking in foreign languages (Acts 2:1-4).

Does God still use visions and dreams to communicate specific messages today?

God does reveal not only secrets of the natural realm, regarding for example, our ministerial calling, but those of the supernatural realm (e.g. His own existence and that of His Son Jesus Christ, angels and demons) to His servants (true believers, the righteous—those who fear, worship, revere, and serve God) (Job 4:12-13; Ps 25:14; Pr 3:32; Dan 2:19-30, 47; Amos 3:7; Mt 11:25-27; Jn 15:15). To completely dismiss visions and dreams as occurrences for today would be unscriptural, since they are mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. With that being said, special messages that God's servants, such as the prophet Daniel, Apostles Paul, Peter and John received are extremely rare occurrences. If one is given special revelation from God, it might occur only once in a lifetime. People who claim to receive visions and dreams on a regular basis should be viewed with skepticism. Furthermore, the great outpouring of God's Spirit has not occurred yet. It will happen in the last days, during the heavenly signs, where 'sons and daughters will prophesy, old men will dream dreams, and young men see visions' (Joel 2:28-31; Acts 2:17-20). Today, with the completion of the Bible, God primarily communicates divine revelation and secrets of the supernatural realm to His servants, by His Son Jesus Christ, through His inspired written word (Heb 1:1-2), which is dynamic, and actively accomplishes His purposes (Heb 4:12). Therefore, we must always seek first the word of God, and sound wisdom that can only be obtained through the scriptures, not our own interpretations. Only then, can we know whether any vision or dream we may experience will be in line with the word of God. As the apostle Paul affirms in 2 Tim 3:14-17, that God is powerfully and actively involved in the scriptures. God communicates divine messages to His servants through the Holy Spirit (Mt 11:25-27; Lk 2:25-26; 1 Cor 2:9-16; Eph 3:5). The Bible is the authoritative, infallible, and divinely inspired word of God, with only one correct interpretation. It's not a collection of ideas, opinions, or imaginations of authors (Gal 1:11-12; Eph 3:5; 2 Tim 3:14-17; 4:1-5; Heb 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:20-21).

Examples of why God communicates His messages. To: 1) Announce (Lk 2:9-20). The angel of the Lord announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. **2) Inspire and encourage us, and provide clarity, direction, guidance, and instruction in our ministerial calling** (Acts 9:10-19; 10:10, 17, 28; 16:9-10; 18:9-11; 22:10). **3) Unveil our glorious future destiny** (Mt 17:1-13; 1 Cor 2:9-10; 15:43). **4) Disclose prophetic events to occur regionally** (Gen 41:17-32), as God did in Pharaoh's dream, in which He communicated that there would be a long famine in Egypt. The regularity of the Nile river's annual overflow, meant that long famines were rare in Egypt); or worldwide future events (Mt 24; Mk 13; Lk 21; Rev 9:13-19; 11:15-19). **5) Warn** (Gen 31:24; Mt 2:12-15, 19-23). **6) Expose Satan, and caution us to be vigilant about his schemes** (Eph 6:10-18; 1 Pet 5:8-9).

Personal experiences with visions: Prior to beginning ministerial work, God unveiled the supernatural realm and gave me visions, mainly in the form of auditory visions, and revealed the existence of angels, Satan and demons (Pr 3:32; Dan 2:22). (The devil would not have wanted me to know about him, as he works best in secret, not when he's exposed. Evil thrives in secret!). When God lifted the veil on the spiritual realm, He exposed Satan twice, suddenly and unexpectedly in the middle of the night, and allowed me to eavesdrop on an extremely distinctive, deep and resounding laugh, that no human could ever reproduce. Satan was laughing with extremely wild and sadistic delight. It was the most chilling, cruel