

Dreams, Visions and Seers

The Issachar Ministry

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Chapter 1

DREAMING

The Bible clearly shows that the Lord communicates to people through dreams, visions and even trances. For example if you remove the dream sequences from the beginning of Matthew's Gospel you greatly impoverish its supernatural impact. There are seven references to "dreams" in the New Testament, and five are found in the first two chapters of Matthew.

By and large modern Biblical students in the West regard the interest in dreams and visions as primitive and as unhealthily subjective. Where the Church has ignored this gift, the enemy has stepped in and provided the world with a counterfeit view of interpretation. The unsaved have eagerly lapped it up through psychology (Freud, Jung, etc) and the New Age movement.

Fifteen or twenty years ago we may have had to work hard at convincing Christians of the God-given reality of dreams for our modern era. But today it's more or less a waste of time to attempt to persuade people to believe in dreams. Why? Because many Christians are regularly experiencing dreams and visions today, and they need no convincing of their divine origin.

What we do need is good Biblical criteria for discerning which dreams are from God, and which originate either from our own soul life or demons. Coupled with this we require a reasonably good understanding of Biblical typology and symbolism, in order to correctly interpret these dreams. So discernment and interpretation of dreams seem to be the key need for now

This manual cannot possibly provide all of this, but I have attempted to help with the process of laying a good foundation for learning about dreams and how to interpret them. My own conversion was through a dream, so I am convinced of their reality and importance. However my greatest concern with those who refer a lot to their dream-life and use dreams for guidance, is in the area of too much subjectivity. There is a real danger of falling into deceit if you become too enamoured by your dream-life supposing that nearly all of your dreams come from God.

Nevertheless the Word of God convinces me that such experiences will gather momentum as the End of the Age draws closer. The path we need to tread is one between objectivity and subjectivity of our dream experiences. Too much attention to dreams may delude us, and lead us into pride and spiritual elitism. Too less attention to them may cause us to grieve the Holy Spirit as He visits us with the language of symbols.

I hope and pray that this publication, and books by others on this wonderful subject, might enlighten our eyes and give understanding to our hearts.

“Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding” Proverbs 2: 3-6

Chapter 2

MY CONVERSION DREAM

In early 1967 I experienced the following dream. It was in black and white and lasted for about 30 seconds. There was no voice, movement, or sound in the dream at all, but its effect on me was nothing more than life-changing. It came about 6.00am one weekday.

The figure below shows the dream. A circle, on the left hand side, of a stylised mountain, viewed from side on, with a five-pointed star surrounded it. Although the star was not moving in the dream, I instinctively knew it was “rising” and that it didn’t have long before it would reach its zenith.

If someone were looking from the right-hand side of the mountain they wouldn’t see the star. But since I was “seeing” it from a different perspective (side on) I understood that although still hidden from view, the star was rising and once at the summit would be manifest.

I knew from the position of the star that it would not be too long before it, and its accompanying power, would be fully revealed. There was a sense of dread about this. From my side-on vantage I could also “see” the word R-E-P-E-N-T spelt out high in the sky, on the right hand side. This word couldn’t actually be seen, but I knew it was there. It was large, emblazoned in the sky like a banner - but absolutely invisible. It was clearly a warning sign and a call to respond to its message.

Yet because it was invisible I took it to mean that only those who have “eyes to see” can appreciate what’s going on in the eternal realms. I don’t mean this in any sense of elitism at all, but for me this means God was giving me the opportunity to respond to His season of grace and escape the awfulness of this evil power that is coming upon the earth.

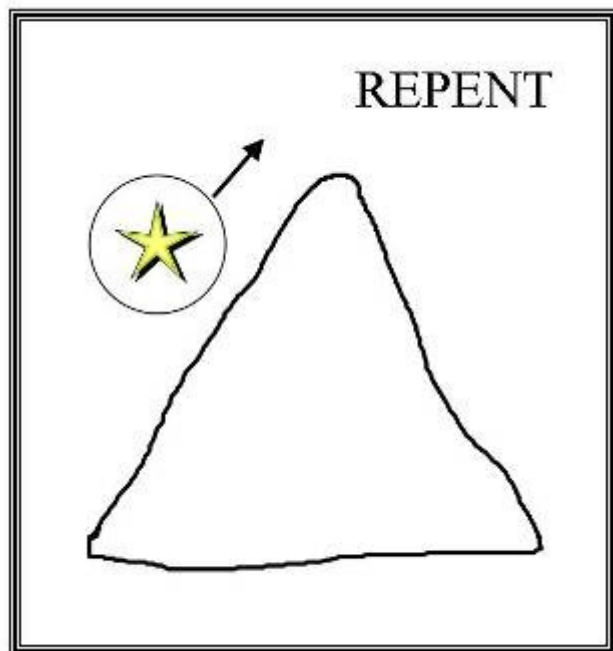
My initial response to this dream calling for repentance (which literally means “to change one’s mind and heart”) caused me to start attending Church. Right from the beginning I understood that the encircled five-pointed star represented evil. Later I discovered it was a common satanic emblem.

In the years that followed the interpretation of the dream deepened to mean the following. The encircled five-pointed star is a sign of the anti-Christ power that has been rising from the earliest of ages. The mountain is hiding the gradual rise of this power. When the star reaches the summit of the mountain, the evil will be made manifest to everyone - but it will be too late.

In the dream I was given the opportunity to see this side-on, giving me an insight into the overall scenario. The Lord was calling me to repent before the evil became fully revealed. A sort of “frame”, much like a window frame, enclosed the whole imagery of the dream. I took

this to mean that I was given insight through a spiritual “window” and allowed to see what was going to happen “soon”. The dream had a sense of urgency about it. Since then one of my most consistent teaching themes has been the End Times. This fits the principle that when your Calling is given, so your Destiny is linked to the events of that Call.

I have used this personal example of a dream to show the impact of such God-given experiences and their life-changing power. At the time no one was witnessing to me; I was not religious at all, and there was no outside Christian or religious influence whatsoever; neither were any members of my family Christian. For me this makes the dream even more remarkable, as it seemed to come from out of nowhere and dramatically intervene in my teenage years. My early Christian life was propelled by this dream, and my conversion dates right from that experience. It's mainly because my conversion came through a dream that I've always been interested in dream-states and visions as recorded in the Word, and people's experiences of them today. I believe that “Repentance” is clearly an End Time call to the Church and the world. It's obviously also a consistent message of the entire New Testament.



Chapter 3

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE DREAM STATE

In most Christian books on dreams there's a glaring omission on how and when dreams occur. It seems that we have become so entranced by the fact that dreams can be a communication from God that we've overlooked the natural biological stages of sleep that dreams work through.

Without trying to take anything away from the supernatural side of dreams and their importance, I believe it will help if we understand the natural process of the sleep state. In becoming aware of this biological process we may discover a way of discerning which dreams are part of the expression of our soul-life, and which might be God-given.

To do this it is necessary to look at what has been learnt from sleep laboratory research. During sleep the rhythm of our brain fluctuates; these are called “brain waves”. When a person falls asleep their brain waves follow a set pattern of changes. These are usually referred to simply as Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4. These waves are measured by a device called an electroencephalogram (EEG for short).

When we're awake the EEG pattern of our brain wave is active every 8 to 12 cycles per second. This is called the Alpha state. As we fall asleep we enter Stage 1, which is regarded as “light sleep”. When this stage is entered our brain waves slow to about 4 to 5 cycles per second, the so-called Theta wave. After a short period of a few minutes (and in the case of extreme tiredness, a few seconds), we enter Stage 2 of the sleep cycle. Our breathing slows and we relax more and more. Soon after this we enter Stages 3 and 4. The brain waves in Stage 4 are called Delta waves and the cycle is down to about 0.5 to 2.5 cycles per second. In other words there is hardly any mental activity in the brain at all at this level.

The Delta waves at this stage form the major part of the sleep and brain wave pattern. This is “deep sleep”. This is entered usually about one to two hours after falling asleep. These “stages” are not always distinct, but they do show the overall pattern of sleep. In fact the process of sleeping and dreaming is a continuous process that happens approximately four to five times a night in the average adult. God has given us a built-in cyclic pattern like the seasons.

Once the first deep-sleep stage has passed at the beginning of a night's sleep, we “re-surface” so to speak to Stage 1 again. It's in this state that we dream. From then on we go through the cycle again from Stage 1 down to Stage 4, then back to Stage 1 and down to Stage 4 or climb to Stage 3. As this pattern continues we gradually go from Stage 1 (dreaming) and enter the higher levels of Stage 3 (See chart). This cycle will happen 4 to 5 times a night.

As we enter different levels of sleep there are physical symptoms that accompany each stage. One of the most common is the activity of our eyes. This is called either Non-Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) or Rapid Eye Movement (REM). During Stage 1 after the first cycle has happened there is considerable REM. This indicates a dreaming state. Watch your cat or dog next time they dream, and you will notice how they twitch their face and eyes.

In the laboratory when subjects have been woken up during Stages 2 to 4 they hardly ever report a dream. But when woken up during REM in Stage 1 the subjects nearly always say they've just been dreaming. This means we dream most often during Stage 2 (after having first entered the sleep cycle: see chart), and do not dream in the other stages. This dreaming state takes up about 20% of our total sleep time. This of course doesn't mean God is confined to giving us a dream at these set times, but since He's the Creator it's obvious that the cycle of sleep pattern is His creative work, and He is most likely to use it.

This makes sense to me regarding my own Conversion Dream. When I awoke from sleep that morning after having the dream I knew I had just had it. It wasn't something that I dreamt earlier in the night, say at 1.00am. I realised I had just had the dream. I recall waking up, sitting on the side of my bed and thinking about it. I then got up, dressed, and went off to work.

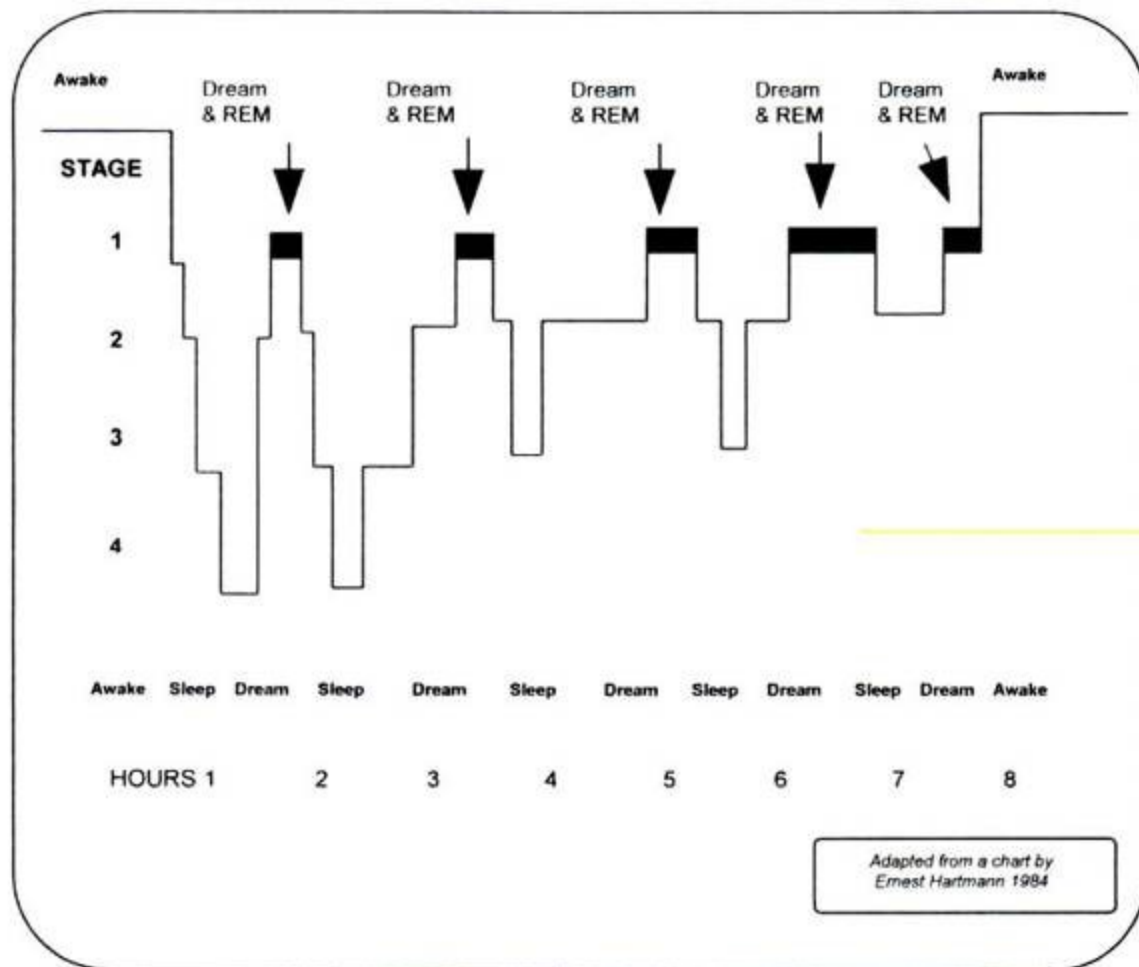
In the following chart you can see that the final dream cycle occurs on an “up”, that is Stage 1, from which we then awaken and go about our daily business. This is exactly what happened to me. God gave me my dream minutes before waking. He also chose to give it to me during the last cycle of the sleep pattern - presumably so I wouldn't forget it easily! But it also impacted me very strongly because I'd just experienced it.

Is there a clue in this for us? When God gives us a dream is He likely to give an important communication to us earlier on in the night if we're likely to forget it? After all if God wants to get through to us He'll also make sure we remember what He imparted. Isn't it more probable that God would give us important dreams closer to our waking time? And if He chose to give us a dream earlier on, then He'd make sure we could recall it either by bringing it back to mind on awakening, or waking us up during the night just after having the dream

It also seems from research that the first couple of dream states are the shortest, and the longest dreams occur at the end of the sleep pattern, that is, just prior to waking up. It would be interesting to know when the majority of Biblical dreams occurred. For example did Jacob have his dream of the ladder in the final stages of his sleep pattern? In Genesis chapter 28 verse 18 it says that Jacob arose “early” in the morning having just recalled his dream. The Hebrew words for the phrase “early in the morning” is shakam (H7925) boqer (H1242) interpreted as “dawn, at the break of day”. So the most probable meaning is that the dream came at the end of his sleep cycle.

Why is this important? Because we may find a pattern that God-given dreams come later during sleep rather than earlier. If this is so then it could help us to discern between dreams that come from our emotions and those given by God Himself. The former may erupt from within our soul life simply due to the events of the day. The latter may come after an all-night “purging” of our mind through soul-dreams, thus releasing any God-given dreams to come forth. In this way Divine Dreams are likely to be less tainted by issues of the soul and events of the past day.

Here is the pattern of a typical night's sleep.



Chapter 4

SYMBOLISM IN DREAMS

First of all, don't buy or use a book that purports to explain dream symbolism. They're nearly all based on either Freudian or Jungian psychology, and as such are fraught with error.

Both Freud (the so-called "Father of Psychology") and his contemporary Carl Jung were both troubled by inner torments and by their own admission, directed by "outside forces" that Jung called Spirit Guides. In other words, demons! I include this here as a warning because some Christians have wandered into psychology and used concepts and practices that are based on false teaching.

This brings us to a consideration of dream symbolism. I have found that usually when God communicates to us through dreams and visions He often shows us a symbol that is both "ancient" or found in the Bible.

By "ancient" I mean something that isn't normally found in our modern day. For example, it's remarkable how often 21st century people will dream of knights on horseback, or ancient warriors setting out on a journey of discovery. It seems that there's an underlying group of symbols from the ancient past that evoke certain emotional responses in us.

When we look at the Bible (even though it's historically an "ancient" book) we find symbols that readily still speak to us today. This isn't just due to the fact that we've read the Bible and its imagery has "sunk in", because even people who aren't Christians or regular Bible readers, will often have the same images in their dreams. For this reason I find that the best reference for decoding symbols is the Bible.

In order to correctly understand Biblical dream symbolism you will need to dig out the treasures of typology. This is the explaining of symbolism and imagery that gives insight to certain Biblical truths and principles. There are a number of books on this subject (see Bibliography).

However the Lord isn't confined to using Biblical symbolism. We can have God-given dreams that have trains, racing cars and computers in them. Remember that the imagery in a dream is pointing to a particular truth or principle that the Lord wants to highlight for us. If He has to use an image of a mobile phone or digital camera to do this, then He will. An important point to remember is that it's not often the symbol itself that's important but the intent of the message and the response it's meant to evoke in us.

For this reason you could dream of a modern jet airplane and quite easily see that the plane itself is not the issue, but what it represents. In such a case it could mean to fly higher than other planes, which may be a truth God is attempting to get through about your own spiritual life. When such modern images come to pass in a dream or vision I usually find it will fairly easily identify with some Biblical imagery of the same nature.

In the case of a hi-tech modern jet plane, it could simply be a modern version of an eagle. Both fly higher than any other of its type, and both point to the desire (or need) to climb higher spiritually. It doesn't take much to link the modern symbol to a more ancient one, particularly one found in the Bible.

A car or train in a dream can also be a modern version of a horse, which stands for "power, spiritual support, or conquest".

I think one of the reasons we tend to "go back" to the more ancient symbols is that they say so much more than the modern. It's obvious that if you start to interpret what a modern jet plane means symbolically, you're going to run out of meanings pretty quick. However, if you transfer the image of the Eagle in place of the jet plane you're going to get a much richer insight to the meaning. An eagle is living, the plane isn't. The eagle can breed, the airliner cannot. Eagles have a will of their own, a plane doesn't, etc.

So when you believe you've received a God-given dream and it has modern images in it, simply try to find the immediate meaning to the overall dream. Then see if you can replace or transfer the modern image with a Biblical one that fits. You'll be surprised how easily it can be done.

Generally I would advise that you don't delve too deeply into dream interpretation. It's highly subjective, that is, it depends on you finding the meaning. And as the Word of God says the heart of man can trick you "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?"(Jer 17:9)

If you do have a God-given dream that's highly symbolic, stick to the Biblical imagery and typology. It's a good safeguard and will save you from wandering into the likelihood of

deceit. By and large most dreams with symbols in them can be readily worked out by a close reading of what the Bible says about those very symbols, or their modern counterparts.

I once sought the Lord about this in regard to my conversion dream. I felt He impressed upon me the parallel principle regarding tongues and interpretation. He showed me that when He gives a message in tongues He will always give the interpretation along with it, either to the speaker or someone else present. So with the dreams He gives. When He sends a dream to us He'll always give us the interpretation as well, just like speaking-in-tongues.

I found this very helpful. It can mean that the dreamer himself will have the interpretation for his own dream, or in some cases, someone else may be able to assist. Generally I don't counsel you to seek an interpretation from others about your dream. Go to the Lord yourself and ask Him. Asking others may leave you open to manipulation or suggestion. If the Lord gave you the dream, then He's most likely to give you the meaning as well.

Chapter 5

RESPONDING TO A DREAM

Dreams bring revelation, but they're also meant to illicit a response on our part. Until we obey what the dream is saying we won't move on in God.

If our dreams require a response from us, we will not move to the next stage God has determined for us until we have obeyed. This is the same Biblical principle that we will not be given much until we have been faithful in the little: **"And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities'".** (Luke 19:17)

When a dream keeps on repeating itself over a period of time, it means either we haven't interpreted the dream correctly, or we haven't obeyed what God is trying to impart. Further revelation is dependent on our present obedience.

Watchman Nee put it this way: "Revelation is born out of previous revelation; it is never given in isolation."

I have wondered if this principle can be extended further. Is it possible that dreams and visions are sequential, that is, they are born out of previous dream experiences? Could it be that the revelation that comes with dreams and visions is compounded, building on what we'd received before? If this is true then it's vital that we respond to these experiences correctly in order to grow spiritually.

It's also important to realise that we cannot make a dream happen. Divine dreams and visions come at GOD'S TIMING; therefore they are important because they are given at the right moment for us. The Lord has selected a particular time to communicate to us through a dream, so we need to honour this timing and respond to it.

Dreams will often be given to us by the Lord in response to a heart-felt cry we have. For this reason each dream or vision will have a specific purpose. This of course refers only to "God-given dreams" not the ordinary type we all experience nightly.

Therefore if each dream has its own distinct purpose for us, it will have a corresponding impact upon us spiritually. This impact is not in the “reality” of the experience, that is, in its vividness, etc, but in the response our spirit gives to the dream. A truly spiritual dream will cause our spirit-man to respond.

A principle worth remembering is that Revelation coming from Preaching or Teaching will usually move the hearer’s soul, but a Dream or Vision will move the spirit.

The Lord communicates with our spirit-man, not our soul. The latter acts as a kind of amplifier or filter of man’s spirit. This is why it’s important to have our soul-life under control.

If we receive revelation via a dream or vision and our character/soul/mind is not submitted to the Holy Spirit, we’re likely to taint the message.

The same applies to the interpretation of a tongue, or the giving of a prophetic word. The soul must be mastered by our spirit under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Just as interpretation of a tongue must not be by the mind or intellect, so it’s important that dream interpretation must not be rational or intellectual but spiritual (1 Cor. 2: 14)

In interpreting dreams and visions there may be times when we shouldn’t just go by our own interpretation. We could make more of the symbolism than is intended. Also we’re most likely to see it through the eyes of our own needs, desires and even doctrine! Sharing a dream or vision with a mature believer can bring quite a measure of balance.

If you do feel the need to share with someone I think the same protocol is necessary that applies to sharing a Word of Knowledge or Prophecy. The person we share with needs to recognise that we’re sharing something very personal and that confidentiality is vital. There needs to be boundaries in place when opening up to others, not so much on our part but for those we share with.

However we need to be aware that sharing these experiences with others might not always benefit us. Some of the consequences of too readily opening up to others who do not understand spiritual things are, being misunderstood, accusation of pride or elitism, and vulnerability to verbal attack

If after seeking for an interpretation and it still doesn’t seem to come, don’t fret or strain to get it. Linger with the Lord and let His Spirit bring revelation step by step. Also we shouldn’t just seek for the interpretation alone, but the effect it’s meant to have on our life as well.

In desiring to obey a dream or vision some people will attempt to decipher every symbol or meaning. Remember that not all things in a dream have the same importance. Dreams in particular, more so than visions, are like parables. In understanding a parable it’s often the overall first impression that gives the heart of the message.

In the parables of Jesus there is often one, or at the most, two meanings. It was a teaching method used extensively by rabbis to use an everyday experience and relate it to some spiritual truth. These parables were not meant to be dissected to discover any hidden truths, but to act like a sudden revelation of one particular point being made.

So too with dreams. I've found that it's the first impression that gives the meaning. After realising this, you can then look deeper into specific symbols in the dream. These will confirm the impression you first sensed was right.

The recording or writing down of dreams will assist this process because in the very writing of it forgotten parts of the dream seem to be brought back to our memory. The act of committing the dream or vision to paper is also a way of honouring the importance of the experience.

Chapter 6

DREAMS AS WARNINGS

In the Bible there are numerous examples of dreams used to bring a warning. We find one instance in Genesis where Abraham (for the second time!) pretends that Sarah is his sister (Gen 20: 2 / compare 12:11)

The unsuspecting King Abimelech takes Sarah to his harem but is warned in a dream not to touch her and to return her to Abraham. God in His mercy graciously warned this heathen king. One of the interesting things I find in this event is that God and Abimelech have a conversation with each other while the King is in a dream state! (See Gen 20:3-7). We'll look at this ability later, particularly in regard to visions.

In the New Testament the most famous dream warnings are found in Matthew's gospel. The wise men are warned not to return to Herod (Matt 2:12). Interestingly enough this seems to be a season of dream-warnings because just after the wise men depart Joseph is also warned in a dream and told to flee to Egypt for a time. However in the latter case it's an angel that brings the warning, though still in a dream (Matt. 2:13).

There are many such examples of dreams giving life-saving warnings throughout history. It seems as though when a warning comes via a dream there is a time frame involved that gives us time to consider it. The dream may warn of something that's going to happen many hours before it occurs, an accident for example. The warning is giving us time to pray about it. The intercession can avert the disaster. Just because we have a dream that shows a friend drowning or in a plane crash doesn't mean the event is necessarily inevitable.

God will often alert us to a scheme of the Enemy so we can intercede to cause the accident not to happen. So don't just accept warnings fatalistically as if there's nothing you can do about it. God may be calling you to prayer!

However, warnings that come in the form of a vision seem to be much more urgent, warning of impending danger. Take this example for instance.

During World War II a lady in England was sitting in church one Sunday morning. Suddenly she had a vision of the building being destroyed in an explosion. She jumped to her feet and told the congregation. The pastor decided to clear the church immediately. A short while later a bomb fell and destroyed the building. ("Take another look at guidance". Mumford. Page 132)

I had a personal experience of such a dream-warning when our son was just a toddler. My wife and I were touring Kangaroo Island off the coast of South Australia, staying in a motel.

One night I dreamt that Jeremy was standing close to the edge of a cliff and in danger. This kept me on the alert for most of the next day. But toward the end of the day I had relaxed my vigilance a little. It was at that stage that our son had wandered some distance from us playing near a drop that I had not realised was there. At that moment the Lord brought back to mind the dream and I turned to see Jeremy standing very close to a considerable drop. Without panicking I quickly walked over to him, whisked him in my arms and carried him to safety.

No doubt many of you can relate similar and even more dramatic experiences. They are not at all uncommon. In these cases the dreams or visions warn of some physical danger.

However God also uses dreams to warn us of moral and spiritual consequences that are going to occur unless we take evasive action. This type of warning is found in King Amalech's dream in Genesis 20: 3-7.

Since the dreams we are talking about have their origin in God, it's extremely important to take note of them. The Lord will often warn those in leadership of some danger looming in the Fellowship, even before the eldership have discerned there is a problem. This very week a lady in our Fellowship passed a note onto me of such a dream-warning, alerting me to a pastoral issue that she had no knowledge of at all in the natural.

The Church will be greatly impoverished if we ignore such warnings. In some cases it could mean allowing the Enemy to continue working within the local Fellowship to bring about division, or even the death of someone.

A word of caution here: if you ever have such a dream-warning that involves people you know in the local church or community, it wouldn't be wise to simply go and share it with them.

Use some wisdom, and approach the leadership first for counsel. Don't leave it too long, but do go and seek advice. It's not always the right thing to flash the warning lights so-to-speak as it may cause undue anxiety for the person involved. The dream may be for you to pray about; it's not always necessary or correct to share these warning-dreams with others. Use your discretion in the matter.

Chapter 7

VISIONS COMPARED TO DREAMS

What is the Biblical difference between a vision and a dream? In the Hebrew language a vision has the meaning of something mentally seen; an actual appearance; a form. The Greek has a similar definition: an apparition; something actually gazed upon; an external inspired appearance.

This means that visions usually take place in an awakened state, not when we're asleep. It's like a direct illumination from God that breaks through and lets us see the spiritual realm around us. Of course we do not see everything of that realm, but only what the Lord chooses for us to see. It can be an appearance of Himself or an angel, or of some event happening around us that in the natural we can't perceive.

A dream on the other hand has subtle differences. The Hebrew defines them simply as a dream of the night season. In its verb form it's linked to the concept of health and strength. The Greek says a dream is something that appears or is seen in sleep.

Sometimes a dream is defined as a vision in sleep, making the distinction from a waking vision. In fact there are cases when people have been dreaming and then find themselves experiencing a vision within the dream itself! This explains the term a vision in sleep.

An important difference between a vision and a dream is that visions often, but not always, show us something that's actually happening around us at that precise moment, although we can't see it with our natural eyes. Dreams however seem to be generally for the "curing" of the soul, alerting us to things we've neglected but should rectify.

Visions give us a strategy to deal with the issue at hand. In the Bible angels were often used for this purpose acting as messengers or "bringers" of the vision. Note this example when an angel is used by the Lord to actually bring forth a vision for the prophet to receive even further revelation (Zech. 5:5). **"Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, 'Lift your eyes now, and see what this is that goes forth'".**

Zechariah was already in a vision-state when this vision within a vision was given to him!

Other than a trance there seem to be two types of visions. One is the "open" vision. This is what is sometimes referred to as an "outer" vision, something actually seen like an angelic visitation. In this experience our eyes are open and our emotions, thoughts and mind are all active. We might be going about our daily business, or at prayer, or meditating on the Word, when suddenly a seen flashes before us. It's a sovereign work of the Lord and can catch you completely unawares. In some cases it can suspend the natural workings of the mind briefly, and even affect the body; you might be momentarily unaware of any pain or discomfort.

The other type of vision is the "inner" or closed type. These come more subtly and can be accompanied by "flashes" of revelation. They seem to be more "within" us and seem to be mentally perceived. Sometimes, they're referred to as "mental images".

Many prophets describe them as appearing on the screen of the back of the forehead, on the inside. In fact I've noticed that when I'm active in the Holy Spirit and aware of His moving in a church meeting for example, that I'm particularly focused in on my forehead quite automatically.

Although this can sound a little like a New Age technique, there's a parallel in the legitimate Christian experience of this. Many prophetic people say that they "see" a word or image at the back of their forehead. The occult version of this is the third eye, which is believed to have super-sensory abilities. This is no doubt the satanic counterfeit to a God-given ability to receive a visionary experience.

One question that's often asked is "why does God communicate like this?" Why doesn't He just "speak" through the Bible?

I believe an important reason is because what we hear can be so easily forgotten. What we see and hear is often retained much better. It's important to note that just as we have the natural senses, so we also have spiritual senses.

These often act in tandem, so that you might be looking with your natural eyes but seeing something through your spiritual eyes. However, when you try to explain to someone what you're seeing the person can be quite confused as to just what you're seeing!

This is when people begin to distance themselves from you, and misunderstanding is likely to arise. It's part of the pain you have to bear if the Lord has called you into this ministry. Visions also affirm to us the reality of the spiritual world around us. We actually see it in action. Dreams however are more likely to be subjective. And we cannot always be sure whether last night's dream came as the result of a bad day at the office or the pizza we had before going to bed!

Visions seem to break through and confront us. They are powerful and direct. You won't find wasted words in a visionary experience. God speaks clearly and to the point. During a vision all else around us seems to fade and we are focussed absolutely on the matter at hand. In this state time is held at bay. Coming out of a visionary state the physical body may feel weak or even in shock (Dan. 7:15).

"I Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head, troubled me."

People will often look drained after such an experience. The impact is so great that it confounds our mental processes and it takes time for the meaning of the experience to sink in. It can also bring with it a sense of dread, a renewed fear of the Lord, and puts things into their eternal perspective. A vision will challenge your spiritual laxity.

Dreams and visions aren't confined to believing Christians either. Cornelius wasn't a believer in Jesus when he experienced his vision (Acts 10:1-3).

And compare these accounts of Muslims experiencing dreams and visions in many places today: A team belonging to the missionary athlete's movement Athletes in Action reports from their visit to the Central Asian republics of Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan: "One of the journey's most interesting experiences was to listen to a large number of people telling how they became Christians. Previously they had been atheists or Muslims. Some told us how God had spoken to them in dreams." (Source: Linda J. Brown, Athletes in Action; 1997).

Muslims often come to Jesus through dreams and visions. A new convert in Nigeria was being tortured by his tribe. Close to death in his hut he prayed aloud that God would forgive his torturers. He didn't know that they were present and heard his prayer. The following night the two mullahs had visions. One saw Jesus who showed him his secret sins. Both mullahs repented and went with their 80 followers to a church. (Source: Australian PrayerLink newsletter, Year 5, No. 3 Aug. 1997).

These stories could be told again and again. Through dreams, visions and angelic visitation Muslim mullahs, Jewish rabbis, Buddhist monks and people of no faith at all, are being confronted by the God of heaven who is pouring out such experiences as the End of the Age draws nearer and nearer.

We shouldn't be surprised to hear of such things, for God has said, **"I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams"** (Acts 2: 17).

Chapter 8

TRANCES

Of all experiences it's the trance-state that causes so much consternation amongst Christians. For most people a trance is something akin to demon possession. It seems to infer total lack of self-control. Yet we find this state mentioned twice in the New Testament (Acts 10: 9-18, 28 and Acts 22:17). So let's take an in-depth look at what they are and how they differ in nature to dreams and visions.

There is no word in the Hebrew language for a trance. This isn't surprising since there is no Biblical record of one occurring in that period, unless you take Balaam's experience in Numbers 24:3-4. This doesn't mean that trances didn't occur, it's just that there's no decisive Old Testament record of such an experience.

In the Greek we find the word ekstasis (G1611 in Strongs) from where we get the word ecstatic. In popular thought to speak of ecstasy or to be ecstatic brings to mind a sense of loss of presence of mind. It gives the sense of being "caught away into some other realm". As we will see this is not entirely without foundation.

The word "trance" means "a displacement of mind", "bewilderment", "amazement", "astonishment". Professor Vine in his Expository Dictionary defines it as "a condition in which ordinary consciousness and the perception of natural circumstances were with-held, and the soul was susceptible only to the vision imparted by God."

The other NT word that is equivalent to "trance" is "amazement" (Strongs G1611). It is the same spelling as 'ekstasis' (ekstasis) and is translated as, "standing out of one's self; displacement; a condition by which the person is thrown into a state of surprise or fear, or both".

It's used to describe the experience found in Mark 5:42, where Jesus raises a girl from the dead. Similarly in Luke 5:26 the word is used in the healing of the paralysed man.

Mark 5:42 **"Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age. And they were overcome with great amazement."**

Luke 5:26 **"..and they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear saying; we have seen strange things today."**

In both situations it's the onlookers who are "amazed" at the sight of such miracles. So even though our popular term for trance seems to imply some sort of semi-conscious state while undergoing a dreamlike experience, it's not always the case.

Imagine for a moment how the onlookers to the miracles described above would've felt. There would've been raw emotions mixed with utter astonishment. This sudden breaking-in of heaven could easily cause a person to undergo an "altered state of consciousness".

As they stood transfixed at the dead girl now raised to life, their minds would've been in turmoil. It wouldn't be too far-fetched to assume that one or more of the onlookers could've fallen into a mini-trance state momentarily as they stared at the resuscitated body before their very eyes. No doubt at that moment they could've undergone some spiritual

experience. This is just as valid a trance-experience as Peter's was on the roof in Joppa. Perhaps we need to reconsider just what we declare to be "trances"?

If being "amazed" or "astonished" is like falling into a trance, no matter how fleeting, then we could say that trances occur more often than normally thought. Medical researchers have even suggested that the common "daydream" is a mild form of a trance. If this is so in the neurological sense, then when we're meditating on the Lord, or are overcome by the anointing presence of the Holy Spirit, we could well be experiencing a trance, even if only in an elementary form.

There are no doubt various levels of this experience, and it may be wise to be open-minded in our definition of just what is a trance.

Further, it needs to be understood that a trance is only the physical and mental condition that acts like a vehicle for a revelation or vision to come. The trance itself is not an encounter with God; it's merely the medium He has chosen for the impartation of some revelation.

In a trance situation, what's important is not the state of the individual but the message that is given while in that state. Viewed like this many Christians may feel more comfortable about such experiences. A trance bypasses our intellect, doctrine, tradition or legalism (compare Peter's trance in Acts 10: 9-18). It's perhaps for this very reason that the Lord chooses this type of experience for some people rather than the more "normal" dream or vision-state.

In occult practice trances can be induced using techniques like breathing rhythms, and light and sound to manipulate the body and mind. Such techniques are used to bypass the rational intellect and so allow for the entrance of demonic influence.

Therefore to actively seek out a trance-state can be dangerous. Allow the Lord to bring them forth, and then having experienced it, remained focused on Him and His message, not the event itself. And be cautious about telling others - pride is so easily aroused!

Biblically speaking trances cannot be manufactured to happen, but are given by the Lord as He chooses. They seem to be somewhat rare but still within the framework of His operation.

Note that Peter falls into his trance. It happened to him as an outside experience. He wasn't seeking it, but at God's opportune time he fell into it. Biblically I believe that this is one of the characteristics of trance; that you "fall" into a trance, not "have" one.

Reading Acts 10:9-11 we see this is just what happened to Peter at Joppa. **"The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him, and let down to the earth."**

Note that the Greek word "fell" has very rich meanings associated with it.

Strong's Number G1968 says that "epipipto" means to "embrace with affection or seize, with more or less violence. It literally or figuratively means "to fall into, on, upon, lie on, press upon".

It seems that when in a trance, a person is “violently” taken into another state, and that this condition “presses in” on the person's boundaries without their permission. There is a real sense that a trance is “imposed” upon a person. Note the extended meanings of the word in the above definition from Strong’s Concordance.

Paul experienced a trance while at prayer in the Temple (Acts 22:17-18), and saw the Lord as well as hearing Him speak. **“Now, it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the Temple, that I was in a trance and saw Him saying to me, “Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me”.**

A trance also allows us to perceive things clearly. In such a state you will “see beyond the veil” as it were. You enter into another realm, and the body becomes quieted and stilled. In this experience you will easily “see”. This is one of the Biblical characteristics of being in a trance. **“Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him, and let down on to the earth.”**

Notice though that even having undergone such a powerful experience, the local church doesn't simply except it at face value. In Acts chapter 11 the brethren test this revelation given to Peter. Interestingly enough, they don't challenge his experience of the trance, but they do weigh up the message given through it!

This is an important principle for us to remember. We need to test the revelation given. Usually in the Western world we test the experience first! Does this show how far we've removed ourselves from accepting the supernatural as the norm?

Generally speaking full-blown trances don't seem to be that common, although at the End of the Age we could expect to see an increase in these. Be discerning of Christians who say that they have this experience as a regular occurrence. Test both the spirit behind it and the message that was supposedly given. We are in a time when spiritual experiences are only too open to deception.

Before I finish this section I encourage you to read a fine article on the dangers of being too passive. You can read it in the appendix.

Chapter 9

OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCES

While this is not a Biblical term it does fit the description of what sometimes accompanies a visionary state. Medically speaking almost any type of trauma can induce a state often referred to as an OBE (out-of-body experience). For example a doctor in La Fayette, Georgia USA was attacked and badly beaten up. This sudden trauma caused him to leave his body momentarily until his medical staff brought him round.

Along with trauma there are other ways of having an OBE, such as drugs, both prescribed and illicit. At first glance the use of drugs to hasten an out-of-body experience seems to be acceptable to many people, even today.

While Hindu “holy” men sit in yogic contemplation for years trying to achieve Nirvana (Paradise) many Westerners see drugs as a quick way to experience the spiritual realm. For many drugs is the poor man’s form of yoga. Both produce a similar state, but the drugs are without any form of internal discipline.

Listen to this seemingly glowing report of an out of OBE after taking drugs.

“LSD opens the mind and releases an enormous amount of awareness energy. Here is a key to the mystery which has been passed down for over 2,500 years; the consciousness expansion experience, pre-mortem death and re-birth. It is possible to get behind the ego of consciousness, to tune into the neurological processes, which flash by at the speed of light, and become aware of the treasure of ancient racial knowledge, welded into the nucleus of every cell in the body. Drugs can open this door.”

Although the LSD craze of the 1960s was the most popular form of encountering this state, it certainly wasn't always with good results. Today’s drug culture is a child of that era, but the OBE's are decidedly more dangerous - as well as more common.

Eastern religious meditation techniques can certainly provide a way of tripping out into other realms. My own experience of Transcendental Meditation back in the 1970s proved this to me. The only thing is that these are demonically controlled and open a most dangerous gateway into the spiritual realm.

Other ways of having an OBE can include séances, necromancy (the practice of calling up the dead), Ouija boards, New Age re-birthing techniques, to say nothing of witchcraft and shamanism. According to the Word of God these are absolutely forbidden and dangerous. Even hypnosis, whether it is self-hypnosis, or that induced medically or for entertainment, can bring about an OBE.

Notice that there’s a difference between experiencing an OBE due to trauma or illness, and those actually induced by some technique. The latter are more often referred to as Astral Travel.

The image of a witch riding a broomstick is a visual representation of what they do in the spirit; ride the astral plane to various locations aided by demonic spirits. It’s more than just a fanciful tale that witches ride brooms; they actually can project themselves in the spirit to other locations. Note that the Bible doesn't say that such things aren't real, or that they don't work. They work all right, but whose pulling the strings?

A warning to Christians

In our desire to experience the heights of the spiritual realm we can be deceived into “priming the pump” spiritually. Many believers will spend long amounts of time in fasting, prayer or waiting on God with the expectation of having some spiritual experience of Him.

This is really a form of idolatry, putting the experience or object of our desire before the Lord Himself. I’m not criticising our effort put into prayer, fasting and seeking the Lord, but we should be aware of our motives for doing so.

It’s not unusual to hear Christian's say something like “I’m going to wait on the Lord until I have an experience of His presence”. But we’ve often failed to understand the dynamic link

between our spirit and soul. We can fall into the snare of learning how to control our own spirits. When this happens, unless our soul-life is in order and bearing the Fruit of the Spirit, we can enter into a very powerful area of controlling others. Let me give a personal experience.

Some years ago during a church service, while standing in front of someone who had some intuitive knowledge of how to read another person's soul, I felt they were actually looking into me - no doubt for what they thought were good purposes. I was standing with my back to this person but soon discerned what was going on. I could actually sense this person "reading" my soul trying to "bless" me. The person was "praying" for me to grow spiritually. I turned and looked. The person smiled and stared deep into my eyes.

To some people it might sound okay, but it was demonic. This person could control their spirit-state, although their character and soul were way out of order. Their previous life in the occult had been a subtle training ground for the controlling of one's spirit-man, even though this person never recognised it as such.

As a Christian this area had not been totally handed over to God for cleansing and renewal, so the ability to manipulate spiritual things still operated in this person from time to time. I quietly rebuked the power at work, and moved to another seat. The Word of God shows us that we are a three-fold being. It further shows that the entirety of our spirit, soul and body needs to be preserved.

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you, completely; and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 5:23)

If there's any area of our spirit-man that's open to deceit we should plug the gap quickly. If we allow doorways into our spiritual state and begin to let it rule our soul-life, we'll be in trouble. This is exactly what those in Satanism and the occult do. They have developed the control of their spirit-man to such an extent that they can manipulate both their own soul-life and that of other vulnerable people.

To actively attempt to mould and manipulate one's spirit by use of soul power through meditation, drugs or religious techniques is a very powerful, but dangerous business. It is not the Biblical way. This is one reason why man was forbidden to approach the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17) because it would give him the conscious ability to control his spiritual powers. In a sinful and rebellious state this would prove disastrous for mankind - which indeed it did.

Only because of and through the Cross may we approach, and then it's to another tree; the Tree of Life. God could only trust man in this born-again state to be in touch with the spiritual realm. Here spiritual life overrode soulish knowledge.

When we're truly and consistently abiding in the born-again state we cannot manipulate our spirits at all, if we are living under the power of the Holy Spirit. God chooses the time for any revelation that might come to us: we cannot control this area - it's too dangerous, and God knows that. So through His Holy Spirit He brings a revelation to us when He chooses.

What has this got to do with out-of-body experiences?

We should never attempt to induce an OBE. When meditating on the Word of God, or waiting upon him in prayer, we should be alert to any sense of becoming passive. (See the important article by Jessie Penn-Lewis in Appendix 1)

Do not let your mind go blank or your soul become passive. It's surprising how many Christians will "turn off" and just passively sit or stand before the Lord when the Pastor says, "Now let's all just be quiet in the Lord's presence and wait upon Him".

I often warn people about this passivity. It's an Eastern religious technique to empty the mind in order to receive some impression or "revelation". It's not the Biblical thing to do, but rather than an occult method of receiving some spiritual impression. If someone prophesies while in this passive state, it might sound Biblical because of the language, but it's most likely to be a deceiving religious spirit.

Rather, we should be active in waiting upon God. Don't turn your mind or thoughts off. Let your spiritual eyes be alert. When I wait on the Lord like this I might look quiet and still on the outside, but inside I'm actively seeking to hear from the Lord. My spiritual eyes (1 Cor. 15:44) are "moving" seeking what the Lord wants to say or do next.

In fact, the Hebrew word for "wait" has this precise meaning. The Strongs number is H6960 "qavah" (pronounced kaw-vaw) means to bind together (perhaps by twisting), to collect, **to expect**, gather together, look, patiently tarry, wait (for, on, upon).

You can see that it's far from being a passive state. We are to "expect" to "look for", even to "gather together" what the Lord is doing as we wait upon Him. Furthermore we shouldn't attempt to make our soul subject to our spirit. Many believers presume that it's a spiritual truth, to make their soul subject to their spirit-man; but it isn't.

The only way you can make your soul (emotions, thoughts, desires, etc) subject to your own spirit is to connect the two by some method. How would you do this? You would have to deliberately and consciously join the two and then order the soul to obey your spirit-man. But the question is, can you trust your spirit-man? It might sound right, but it's actually a method used in witchcraft. Our soul needs to be under the authority of the Word of God, and the inner working of the Holy Spirit, not our own spirit.

Also, our spirit can be vulnerable to outside influences, that's why Paul prayed for the Thessalonians (and us) that our **"whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"**. (1 Thess. 5:23).

I know some Christians believe that the spirit of man is automatically safe from attack, but I find little direct Biblical evidence that this is the case where the soul is not under discipline. Based on the above Scripture it seems that we do need to be active in maintaining a cleansed and pure spirit-life just as we do with our soul-life.

This seems to be supported by what John says about the need to guard ourselves, even though we're born-again: **"We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him"** (1 John 5:18).

The phrase "keeps himself" gives us the clue. Strongs number is G5083. "Tereo" means to guard from loss of injury, **by keeping the eye upon**, i.e. to note a prophecy; figuratively

meaning to fulfil a command, by implication to detail in custody; to maintain; by extension to withhold (for personal ends; to keep unmarried): to gold fast, to keep, to observe, to preserve, to keep in reserve, to watch.

The text suggests that even though we are born-again the Devil can't touch us. But this will be a safeguard only if we watch over and preserve our spirit-man. Think about this: if we allow our soul-life to be controlled by our spirit-man then we'd be at the whim of whatever we felt we should do or say. Rather we should be submissive in spirit, soul and body, only to the Holy Spirit Himself.

As we submit to Him and allow Him to take the initiative within us, we can be assured that it will be God who's directing our life. The voices we will then hear, and the promptings we'll get, will not be our own impulses, but from the Lord. If we're in conscious submission to the Holy Spirit then we'll act only on what He brings forth.

I've laboured this point because many believers are unaware of the link between the soul and spirit. Without being alerted to such insights a Christian could inadvertently encounter things like an OBE and believe it's God, when in fact it's been something of their own doing through attempting to get control of their spirit nature.

Enough of the dark side of this; let's look at what the Word of God tells us about experiences like OBEs, because they do seem to be there. Although there are few direct Scriptures that seem to give support of this manifestation, we can find some interesting passages that probably alluded to the experience.

For example, let's look at Ezekiel chapter 8 verse three. **"He stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my hair; and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem."**

This seems to be a very real experience for Ezekiel; he even saw the form of a hand reached toward him, felt his hair been pulled, and realised he was up in the air.

And in chapter 11 verse 24: **"Then the Spirit took me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to those in captivity. And the vision that I had seen went up from me."**

Note also the next verse (25) in which Ezekiel actually speaks to the captives concerning the Word of the Lord. **"So I spoke to those in captivity of all the things the Lord had shown me"**.

When we're in a dream-state we often speak in the dream. But here, having been "taken away" the prophet actually talks to his fellow Jews. It could be surmised that he was actually "there" and literally speaking to the people.

If this was the case, then this is more than just an out-of-body experience, but more of a "translation" from one physical locality to another.

Again we find other example of this in Ezekiel. First note this description in chapter 37 verse one. **"The hand of the Lord came upon me, and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones"**.

The prophet actually says that he was “set down”. In the Hebrew this phrase can either be interpreted figuratively or literally. Either way it was a real experience for the prophet.

The only debatable point is whether it was an out-of-body experience or a translation of his physical body to another place. It must have been an awesome experience!

Furthermore see verses 1-3a. **“In the twenty fifth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was captured, on the very same day the hand of the Lord was upon me and He took me there. In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south was something like the structure of a city. He took me there.”**

Similarly we find such an experience described in Daniel 8:1-2. **“In the thirtieth year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, to me Daniel: after the one that appeared to me the first time. I saw in the vision, and it so happened that while I was looking that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the river.”**

Here Daniel seems to be describing a true out-of-body experience, for he says “I saw it in the vision”. He instinctively knew it was a vision, but one he was not divorced from, but rather participating in.

Nevertheless he paradoxically states that he “was in (the city of) Shushan”. This gives us a clue to the validity of such OBEs. There seems to be a contradiction when describing them. The person is there yet not totally there! When attempting to describe the event there do seem to be discrepancies.

If we were given an account that fitted well logically speaking, it would give us reason to distrust the episode. However, because spiritual things are by nature paradoxical, then to actually include these seeming contradictions only tends to legitimise them.

For example, if Ezekiel had given us a fairly coherent account of his experience we could simply put it down to him trying to impress us. But his rather paradoxical account only seems to validate what we instinctively know to be true of many supernatural experiences: they are difficult to describe logically.

Despite the caution we should have about too readily regarding many out-of-body experiences as God-given, we do need to be open to accepting that they can happen. We should discern both the account of the event, as well as the character of the person relating the experience. Testing the character, maturity and motives of the person giving the account is vital if we are not to be deceived.

Having said all this I would like to tell of one such account related by Gwen Shaw, founder of the End Time Handmaidens ministry. Gwen has a very good, if not excellent, track record of being accountable, accurate and wise in all her doings.

For this reason I have included an account she passes on and accepts as a valid “taking away” experience. Although it seems to indicate that this was a physical translation rather than a spiritual OBE, it nevertheless has a basic thread common to both experiences.

There is the story about a Russian soldier called Vanya, referred to in the Handmaidens' publication, by the same name (Jasper, ARK, USA, 72641).

Sister Myrna Grant (of the End Time Handmaidens) tells how one night Vanya was taken physically by an angel up to heaven, where he met the apostle John and spoke to him. When he returned to his barrack's after a night in heaven, his comrade in the bed next to him wanted to know where he had gone in the night, because he had not been in the room all night long. The sentry on duty said that no one had left the room.

Although we might like to have more corroborating evidence to support this, I have mentioned it because it's one of the many simple stories that are coming out of Eastern Europe and China about people having these kinds of experiences.

As the Last Days envelope us more and more we can expect to hear an increase in such experiences. Such things seem to easily happen to those without much theological doctrine to hamper them - whether it is simple Russian soldiers or young Chinese waifs.

Note for example, the following account from China. It was recorded during a sudden and mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the 1930s in the Yunnan Province and recorded by Pastor H. A. Baker in his famous book "Visions beyond the Veil" (by Osterhus Publishing House).

The recipients of this manifestation were mainly very young children, who for the most part were beggars and orphans, living at Adullam Rescue Mission run by Pastor Baker and his wife. He writes about one of these occasions when...

"... in the Spirit the children were caught up to the heavenly city time after time, not as in a dream but as a living reality. The visits were so real in fact, that the children supposed their souls actually left their bodies to go to heaven and return, or that in some unaccountable way they had gone to heaven, soul and body just as they might in daily life visit some distant place.

The children said they went to the third heaven. As they passed through the first heaven they felt the air on their faces. Having passed the second heaven, they looked back upon the stars in their wonderful beauty, much as from a mountain height a person might gaze down upon a beautiful, light-studded city below.

When in the Spirit, the children were usually lost to their natural surroundings. In many cases, although they supposed they were in heaven, they talked aloud describing what they saw, thus carrying on conversations that we all could hear. Often they acted out before our eyes what they supposed they were doing in heaven."

The amazing thing about these stories is that the children were often illiterate and hadn't yet been told many of the Bible accounts we take for granted. So they couldn't have subconsciously concocted the events from Bible stories they had heard. They were actually relating what they were seeing and experiencing - and all the accounts were totally verified by Scripture!

So it seems that both Biblically and historically there's strong evidence for out-of-body experiences. But as always there are counterfeits to this. In the sphere of religion we find attempts to induce dreams, visions and OBEs. The practice of incubation was widely

practised in pagan religions as well as in medieval European Christianity. This was an exercise in which a person locked himself in a temple or church and kept vigil, or slept at a particularly famous “holy place”. The intention was to receive a visitation from some divine being.

The all-night vigil was a night spent without sleep. To be deprived of normal sleep, and to use this method in association with fasting and intense prayer can bring about abnormal psychic experiences. Likewise to deliberately put oneself to sleep where there is known spiritual or psychic activity (e.g., at a “holy well”) opens you up to receiving visitations from the territorial powers that have been invoked there. These of course are demonic and thrive on people foolishly entering their territory and making themselves available for such experiences.

Mediaeval knights, when embarking upon a crusade or mission, also practised incubation. They sought the favour of God for protection and military success.

Similarly, practitioners of the New Age use such techniques, whether it's candle staring (watching the flame of a candle without blinking) or meditating at a particular “holy place” - a more modern version of the ancient practice of incubation. Both are intended to create a spiritual experience that usually results in a disassociation of the spirit and body. This is referred to as Astral Travel.

In such cases demonic powers are either knowingly or unwittingly invoked, and it's these that give the seeker the experience, not God. Sadly for the naive person this creates a doorway into the spiritual realm that soon traps them and lures them deeper and deeper into horrific experiences with demons. Satanists use this type of method with the full knowledge of what they're into. But sooner or later the minor demons that they've summoned turn on them and more powerful spirits come in and take over. “Their last state is worse than the first”.

Avoid any attempt from anyone to get you to practice “passive waiting”. This kind of thing has even found its way into Christian congregations and seducing spirits have brought great deception. Please remember that outright deception is easier to spot than subtle seduction. Seducing spirits are much more cunning than straight deceptive teaching. Since most of us know the basics of the Word well enough, strange doctrinal teachings can be seen to be erroneous straight away - or at least with a little reflection.

Seduction of the other hand leads you away from the truth bit by bit. It often comes in the guise of a well-known and respected believer who already has made his or her mark and has been accepted by the church. Since the person is trusted, people will often follow the new revelation or teaching while putting aside their usual discernment. This is how spirits of seduction operate, and they can be quite cunning and skilful in their method. Beware!

Paul warns us about the scenario we can expect to increase in the Latter Days. **“Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.”** (1 Tim 4:1)

Chapter 10

ANGELS IN DREAMS AND VISIONS

Many times in the Bible we see how angels have been involved in delivering messages from the Lord in heaven, to His people on earth. While this might be obvious, since the name malak (Hebrew), and angelos (Greek) means “messenger”, it’s also fascinating to see how often angels actually appear in dreams and visions.

Angelic appearances in dreams.

It’s a wondrous thing to ponder that God would communicate to us through dreams. That in itself is something worthy of reflection. But how much more extraordinary is it that He should send an angel to us inside that dream, and then even talk to us in it! This is truly staggering.

Imagine it for a moment. God wants to speak to you, so He arranges you to have a dream. Then as if that’s not remarkable enough, He sends an angel into your dream (somehow), and then gets the angel to give you a message! Truly amazing.

Note this example from Matthew 1:20. But while he thought about these things, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, **“Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit”**.

The question is, why did God bother to give Joseph a dream with an angel in it? Why didn’t He just get the angel to appear before Joseph directly?

Perhaps it depends on the character of the recipient. Maybe Joseph was of such a personality that an “outside” angelic appearance might not have been helpful to him. Perhaps he might’ve been sceptical and disbelieving. Could it be the Joseph was a very reflective type of man, so that an angelic message within a dream would’ve had greater impact upon him than an external visitation?

I’ve always sensed that Joseph was like that, reflective and sensitive. So maybe he was much more receptive to what happened to him because it was explained through a dream. It could’ve been that Joseph already had a very fertile dream-life so this was the obvious medium for the Lord to choose.

This also occurred again, when the Lord brought Joseph a warning. **“But when Herod was dead, behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt”**. (Matt 2:19).

He was obviously open to dreams, and seems to have instantly acted upon what he received in them. It’s interesting to note that Joseph didn’t put down his dream to something else - he didn’t dispute that God had spoken through the dream. It was acceptable to him as a reality.

I wonder how many of us would question, or at least debate, what happened in last night’s dream - even if we did think an angel might’ve been in it. Not so Joseph; he believed what he dreamt, and obeyed.

Whatever the reason for all this, it’s truly a marvel that God can put an angel inside a dream. This really makes us realise the extraordinary properties of the dream-state. When we read about dreams and visions we can sometimes tend to think we have a handle on what they’re all about. We look at the physiological state of the mind, the rapid eye movements, the symbolism in the dreams, their prophetic importance, etc. But when we’re faced with a

spiritual being like an angel actually coming into our dream and being part of it, it's truly amazing. How little we really know of this realm.

Angelic appearances in visions

The appearance of angels in visions is much more common. Sometimes they just appear, as real as the natural surroundings. Other times they're only discerned with spiritual eyes. Occasionally only one or two people in a group see the angel; at other times everyone present "sees" the angelic vision.

Note this example from 1Chronicles 21:16. **"Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of Lord standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces."**

All present saw the angel. But here's a clue to a true visionary state in which an angel features: holy fear comes upon the observer/s.

I've heard people say things like "Oh, I saw an angel in church this morning" or something like that. I've always wondered why they didn't announce it earlier in the meeting, or why they didn't crash to the floor in holy awe!

Perhaps there's a distinct difference between an angel appearing in a vision and one manifesting before our eyes. The latter is most probably when there's a very real sense that an angel is present, with a number of people actually seeing it with their physical eyes. I imagine the result would be a number of bodies quivering on the floor! The former is most likely to be a subjective experience of one or two people, who sense an angel's presence and then "see" it with their spiritual eyes. In this case you might be very attentive but probably still standing!

A personal experience

I remember on one occasion, when I was locking up the church building late one afternoon. After bolting the front doors, I turned to head towards the back door to exit the building. I wasn't in any particular spiritual frame of mind, but as I turned ready to walk through an empty building I suddenly sensed the presence of two or more beings standing near the exit door. I froze on the spot! I couldn't see anything with my natural eyes, and remember even trying to get my spiritual insight working so I could "see" what was there. But nothing. I just knew there were a couple of invisible beings standing near the back door - and no way was I going to go there.

There was no concern on my part that they were demonic, even though I quickly checked this out with the Lord. However I knew "what" was there was friendly, but I still wasn't going to walk over to them.

I stood around at the inside front door gently praying in tongues and just waiting for something to happen. I didn't sense anything would necessarily happen, but I wondered why I was picking up something with my spiritual senses. After about 20 to 30 minutes of trying to "see" what was there, praying, and generally not knowing what to do, I began to sense they had gone - or at least I was no longer sensing their presence. After a few more minutes I

very tentatively walked toward the exit door skirting around where I thought they might've been standing, and quickly got out and locked the back door.

To this day, I don't know what was going on but I distinctly knew some friendly visitors were present. And I never found out why they were there. Even in praying to the Lord about it I never received an answer. But I did begin to understand what type of reaction people have when an angel is present.

It certainly isn't a flippant emotion, or one of simple interest. It truly does put you on edge - and I was only sensing their presence, not even seeing them, let alone have them speak to me! Even to this day there are times when I skirt around that little spot near the back door!

So there seems to be a difference in how we react to the presence of these beings. Whether it's sensing their presence, having a vision of an angel, through to actually seeing a manifestation, the usual accompanying emotions range from acting guardedly, through to being quite frightened.

Again note some Biblical examples.

“Now Ornan turned and saw the angel, and his four sons who were with him hid themselves but Ornan continued threshing wheat”. (1 Chron. 22:20)

“The angel of Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled and fear fell upon him”. (Luke 1:11-12)

In both the above cases the angel actually seems to manifest itself physically. However in the following text a vision is involved, with an important addition. **“About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius”. And when he observed him, he was afraid.” (Acts 10:3-4)**

Here Cornelius has a vision in which an angel communicates with him. One of the characteristics of a vision, compared to a dream, is that the former is always “clear”. Note again what the word says: “he saw clearly.”

Strong's number G5320. “Phaneros” from G5318, meaning to plainly, **clearly or publicly**, evidently openly.

So it seems that Biblically speaking a vision is “clear” unlike the dream in which there seems to be a lack of “plain” meaning. The language of dreams is mostly symbolic while in a visionary state there's an evident and plain sense of what's taking place. Symbols may still feature in a vision but somehow they're more obvious, and usually more “public”. The symbolism of a dream is hidden away while those of the vision are more apparent. And since the Greek word for “vision” means “publicly” it stands to reason that an angel associated with a visionary experience should be “seen” publicly by the natural eye.

“When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said He was alive”. (Luke 24:23)

“About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!”. (Acts 10:3)

This gives us a clue to how angels are associated with visions. When they appear they do so publicly; they are clearly and openly seen with the natural eyes. It's interesting that the human explanation of this is that the people say they've seen "a vision". They don't tend to say that they "saw an angel" but that they saw a "vision of an angel". This might be expected, because we don't normally see angels around us, so to see one obviously is a vision of one!

This is fair enough, and we automatically think this way. But what happens when in a visionary state an angel appears and begins to speak to you, and even show you revelations? We find ourselves thrust into the same spiritual conundrum as angels appearing inside our dreams. It challenges our logic and reasoning.

It's one thing to have a vision, and even to have an angel appear in that vision, but when the angel then shows you a vision within a vision we're in a very peculiar realm indeed. This happens a number of times in Scripture. Angels come and then proceed to give some revelation through the medium of another vision. A vision within a vision. It's a bit like those little European wooden dolls that you open up only to find another smaller version inside. Then you open up that doll and inside is a more miniature one. And so on. Note the following two examples of revelations within revelations, as well as the role of angels in this. (Zech. 1:8-9)

"I saw by night and behold,(here Zechariah is having a vision of the night) a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white. Then I said, "My lord, what are these?". So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." (Here he receives another revelation within the vision itself!)

The prophet Daniel also had similar experiences. In the following text he's having a visionary encounter, then finds himself transported in the spirit to another actual geographical location. While in this state he then begins to "see" other things. He writes that he "saw in the vision".

In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, to me Daniel, after the one that appeared to me the first time. I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river was a ram which had two horns...then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking...Dan. 8:1-3

Here we have a most extraordinary spiritual experience. The contents are:

A vision appears to Daniel (verse 1)

He is transported in the spirit (verse 2)

Then finds himself in another location (verse 2)

He begins to see within the visionary state itself (verse 3)

The prophet hears an angel speak (verse 13)

Then a conversation between angels takes place (verse 13)

One of the angels now addresses Daniel (verse 14)

A summary of this chapter

The Lord has the ability to place an angel within a dream or visionary state.

Within this encounter the visitation of the angel is seen as quite real to the person having the experience.

There can be an exchange of words in either state. Sometimes, like Joseph in the New Testament, the conversation is one way.

At other times there's a dialogue between angels within the vision itself.

Revelations (or other visions) can be given within the context of an already occurring vision.

Neither "holy" dreams nor visions can be induced by man, but come by the direct will of God.

The reaction to these experiences is normally one of holy awe, and even fear.

There can be a definite bodily reaction to such experiences, even resulting in physical weakness.

Within the dream or visionary state there exists another "internal realm" where other spiritual experiences can take place. These are totally within the control and prerogative of the Lord Himself.

Chapter 11

PROPHESYING IN DREAMS AND VISIONS

Have you ever found yourself prophesying in a dream? While there is little Scriptural evidence for this, numerous Christians have experienced it whilst dreaming. There is however enough Biblical texts to show that prophesying has taken place during a visionary experience. One famous example is found in Ezekiel 37:1-4.

"The hand of Lord came upon me, and brought me out in the Spirit of Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed, they were very dry. And He said to me, "Son of man can these bones live?" So I answered, "Oh Lord God, You know". Again He said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, "Oh dry bones hear the word of Lord!"

It seems that while in either a visionary or dream-state we can still operate in the gifts of the Spirit. Perhaps while in that pristine state of having a vision our prophetic words are likely to be untainted from anything around us. In this way the prophetic word can come forth pure, and so be quite direct, accurate and powerful in its consequences. Prophetic words (or even actions) while dreaming can actually bring forth a release that God intends us to benefit from. I recall having something of this nature some years ago.

I had been studying about the End Times, in particular the Bride of Christ. I went to bed with this on my mind and that night dreamt of a man searching for a bride. In the dream I saw a

young man going from woman to woman asking one of them to marry him. Each time he was refused, but instead of being despondent he would go to yet another young woman and ask her. Finally, after this happened a number of times I heard the Holy Spirit speak loudly to the man saying, "Call forth your bride".

As this happened, while I was still dreaming, the Lord reminded me of an actual occasion when I was younger and desired to be married. I was at the end of my time at Theological College and was about to move interstate for ordination and further training. I really wanted to be married, but felt that not many young Christian women were around who might want to marry a pastor, let alone move interstate after just being married. On top of that I had a disposition toward a certain type of female, hair colour, etc!

In the dream the Lord showed me as I stood at the bus stop near the College. I was thinking this through wondering how on earth I was going to meet the right girl. As I looked on at myself in the dream I suddenly realised that my concern about being married, and my desire to meet the right girl, was in fact a "calling forth of my bride" even though I didn't utter those exact words.

Instantly in my dream I returned to my earlier dream surroundings and found myself echoing the Spirit's words to the man in the dream: "Call forth your bride." I immediately knew that I was prophesying in the dream for the bride of Christ to come forth in the Last Days. The power and the impact of that dream, and the short but strong prophetic word has stayed with me ever since.

Just as the Lord has said that He would speak to the prophets through dreams (Numbers 12:6) so the reverse is also true: God will speak a prophecy in a dream. So you can expect there'll be times you'll prophesy while dreaming. Prophetic words spoken in the dream or vision may not come to pass straight away; they may be indicators of what is yet to come. Intercession, and even spiritual warfare, may have to be engaged in before the prophetic word is fully established.

I encourage you to take note of what is said during your dreams. Often in dreams it's not we who do the talking; in fact many people have a dream-life in which they hardly speak at all. Most of my dreams are like a silent movie - I'm either watching the events or participating in them, but I hardly do any speaking. Perhaps that's just because of my personality. I know of prophetic people who are almost always speaking forth in their dreams - not always prophecy of course, but they do a lot of talking in their dream-state.

Another contemporary example of a dream containing a prophetic word is from Nita Johnson (Prepare for Winds of Change: Third publication, p.61). She writes: I saw a great thick cloud, hovering over the earth. So thick and massive was it and so black, that it made the earth looked totally dark. The angel (in the vision) told me to call for the church. So I did. "Church, come. Arise and flight the great darkness." As I said this I saw a most incredible light slowly fly in the direction of this great dark cloud.

Within the realm of dreams and visions there seems to be the opportunity to actually prophesy a word. If the dream is truly a God-given one then we can rest assured that it was the Lord's bidding that a word should come forth. However, we do need to be careful that dreams originating from our soul don't also contain words from that same realm.

Chapter 12

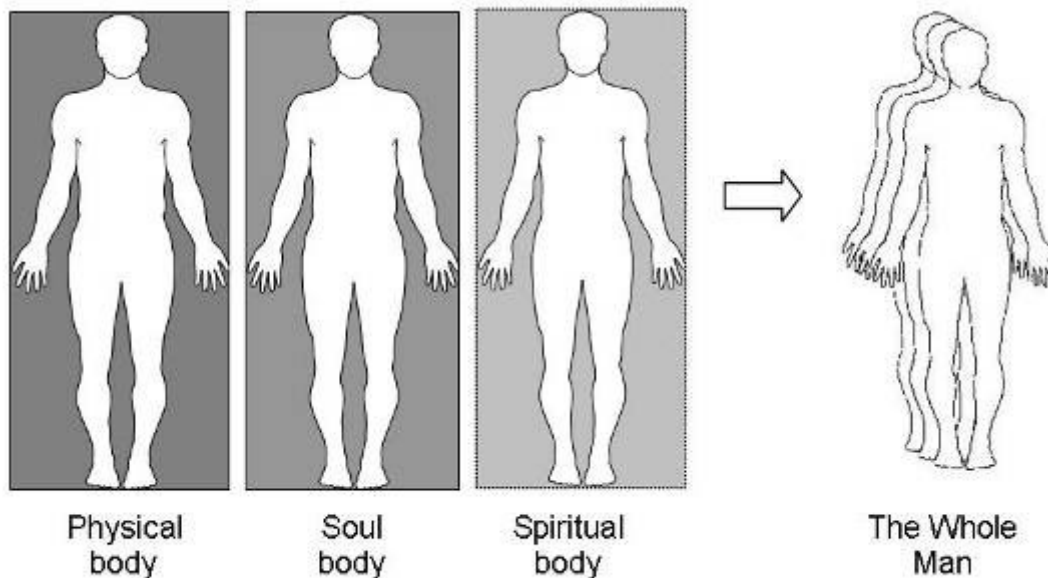
THE SENSES WHILE DREAMING

While dreaming, our outer senses are generally non-functional. It's been said by medical professionals that in the case of a dying person, or someone in a coma, the last sense to go is the ability to hear. So be careful what you say in the presence of an unconscious or dying person!

In a dream-state any sudden noise can instantly bring our senses to a condition of alertness. But as we fall into the pattern of sleep the senses are repressed more and more.

Nevertheless as we dream they seem to be re-activated in that dream-realm. It's not that the natural senses are animated again but that we are able to recall what the senses are capable of and "feel" these happening within the confines of our dream. The ability to "feel" and have "sense feeling" in our dreams is part and parcel of everyone's dream life, and we take of the granted upon awakening. But I believe that spiritually there are times when our spiritual senses take over - they being a mirror of our natural ones.

For example, we are a tripartite being of spirit, soul, and body with our spiritual body having a form similar to our natural frame. One is always visible and the other always invisible. Despite the latter's limitations there are times when we function quite well in using our spiritual senses. The use of spiritual discernment is one of those.



There are occasions in dreaming when the "inner senses" are active. We might use the ears of our spirit man to hear a word from Lord, or see with spiritual insight what is actually happening in a dream.

This operates a little like having the ability to see in a vision when the natural eyes are dulled to the spiritual reality. One of the best Biblical examples of this is found in 2 Kings 6:15-17.

"And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master, what shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us

are more than those who are with them." And the Elisha prayed and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see". Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

In this case the servant's spiritual eyes were operative which in turn probably enabled him to see even with his natural eyes!

It may well be that our spiritual senses are much more alert and active in a dream-state than when we're awake. If we're receiving a dream from Lord then He's going to make certain that we get all we need to from that dream. This is when the Holy Spirit heightens the ability of our inner senses to appreciate the dream. A certain "keenness" happens to our senses in a (God-given) dream or vision, and this only serve to impress the importance of the event even more upon our mind.

"Therefore, I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigour was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground". (Dan. 10:8-9)

Here Daniel has just received a vision and his body is weak from the experience. As he continued on in a deep sleep (probably the "after-flow" of the vision) he hears a voice. There's probably an overlap of operation that the natural and spiritual senses share. In a dream your inner senses may be hearing what the Lord is saying, when all of a sudden you sit bolt upright in bed, because at the same time your natural ears have heard a voice.

This has happened a couple of times when I "knew" what was going on in the dream, and then suddenly I was fully awake sitting up in bed. My spirit-man had heard something spoken in the dream and that the same time I heard an actual voice speak the same thing in my bedroom.

Other people have confirmed that this type of thing also happens to them, so the experience is probably fairly widespread. Many of us have heard that knock at the door or on the bedroom window. Immediately, we wake up quite alert. The first time this happened to me I actually got up and went to the front door! It was that real.

Since then I've experience that kind of thing quite a few times, but now realise what it is. The Lord is trying to get our attention; there may be a need for intercession, or to warn us of danger, etc. Generally our spirit-man has already picked this up through the inner senses, but since we need to be mindful of the situation the Lord causes the natural senses to also plug into what's happening.

This is a fascinating area of how the inner spiritual senses can be activated and used in a dream or vision. In the world of Dream Study we find some interesting scientific and medical support for the view that our senses are operative during sleep, although the medical fraternity are unlikely to refer to these as "spiritual". They might use the term like "inner senses" but even then they'd be guarded. Nevertheless their research does give us some insight into the functioning of the brain and our senses while we sleep.

Prior to 1953 it was thought that sleep gave rest both to the brain as well as to the body. This was clearly discounted by Eugene Aserinsky when he registered brain waves by the

EEG during the sleep pattern. It was obvious that sleep doesn't give the brain any leisure while we sleep. It's still as active as during the day. The only difference seems to be that instead of being awake, we're dreaming.

However out of the five natural senses we have, two of these are quiescent while we sleep. These are the taste and olfactory (smell) neurons. It's interesting to reflect when you last had a dream in which you either tasted something or used your nose to smell. I can't recall one dream I ever had in which I smelt or tasted something. This is because most of the time these natural senses are docile while we sleep, so we don't tend to incorporate them into our dreams. On the other hand when we dream we do things like run, talk, fly and swim, etc. This is because the brain cells associated with these abilities are as active in sleep as they are in our waking state.

Even when we enter the deepest level of sleep (stage four: see page 8) the brain is still very alert with only a 5% to 10% decrease in normal activity. Yet despite this minor decrease in performance the brain and most of the senses, isn't so much at "rest" but are actually gearing up for when we wake.

Apparently the neurons that are linked to learning, memory and attention are closed down and resting. In this state of "rest" the neurons are supplying themselves with whatever they need in order to meet the demands of the coming day. They're in a strange state of "resting" while being "active". According to researchers this is why we wake up feeling alert, energetic and ready to go after a good night's sleep.

It's also been suggested that the reason babies in the womb spend so much time in REM (rapid eye movement) sleep is because that very state is necessary to form the structure of the brain. In other words, babies in the womb are "being formed in secret" (Psalm 139:15) by the Lord's deliberate creative planning through the medium of sleep and dreaming.

Whether or not babies in the womb actually dream the way we do is a mystery. For one thing they have no concept of our world and its experiences. So their "dreams" must be quite different by the very nature of their condition. But they do dream; their REM shows that. Could it be the right from the start of life in the womb God has used the dreaming state as a formative miracle to prepare us for life?

Another helpful insight into the workings of the dream-state was discovered in 1920. A German biochemist was trying to find out whether it was electrical impulses or chemicals in the body that enabled nerves to send messages to the brain. Amazingly enough it was a dream he had that gave him the answer in understanding the chemistry of dreams.

Otto Loewi had the same dream two nights running, and then performed a simple experiment with two laboratory frogs. He stimulated the nerves of one frog thereby slowing down its heartbeat. He then syringed some of that frog's blood into a second frog. Amazingly the second frog's heart rate also slowed. He had discovered that nerves don't send their messages to the brain via electrical impulses, but chemically through the blood.

He had discovered (through a dream) the neuro-transmitter called acetylcholine that actually triggers our dreams. This gives new meaning to the Biblical truth "the life is in the blood". (Lev 17:11)

What we're seeing is that there's a parallel of the inner or "spiritual" senses to the natural everyday ones. This shouldn't surprise us since we are tripartite being. With the possible exception of the senses of taste and smell, we actually use our inner senses in the dream-state. We "see" what's going on in the dream; we "move" about in the dream; we "hear" things; we even "touch" with a reality that's quite striking.

No doubt right from the womb we've been conditioned to being used to dreaming. Upon being born into the world our five natural senses are highly heightened. No wonder there can be a real trauma in being born!

But think of this: for nine months in a safe environment of our mother's womb we've been wonderfully made. For a substantial part of that time our brain has been active; we even dreamed. Something has been going on in our body and mind to prepare us for the time when those natural attributes find their spiritual counterpart in another (new) birth. I think we've often failed to appreciate the great connection there is between the natural and the spiritual realms. It seems that the Natural prepares us to appreciate the far greater Spiritual experiences. Obviously when Jesus said, "you must be born again" there is a far deeper meaning to that truth. Paul picks up this when he said, **"the natural comes first, then the spiritual"** (1 Cor 15:46).

In terms of both our spiritual life and our dream-life there are greater depths yet to be discovered. We do have spiritual senses just as we do have natural ones. Could it be that we can begin to "programme" our dreams and utilise those in the senses while we dream? This is the subject of our next chapter.

Chapter 13

CONSCIOUS DREAMING

Can we have a say in what we dream? This has been the quest of many who are involved in dream research. Obviously, we can't have any say in a God-given dream, precisely because they are God-given. But it does seem that we can "prime the pump" so to speak, and condition some of our other dreams.

This is referred to as Lucid or Conscious dreaming. It's been practised when dealing with childhood nightmares. The method involves teaching children that preparing the mind before going to sleep can control nightmares. This is done by saying to the child before dozing off, "You're going to dream tonight, but it's only a dream, and you can wake up whenever you want". This same technique can also be used for adults. The next step is to get the child or adult suffer to say "I'm going to dream tonight, but I can change the outcome of the dream if it gets too threatening".

Apparently, this works quite successfully, but again it can only do so when the dreams are not divinely inspired. Let me share with you a personal example of a lucid dreaming.

Recently, after reading of this possibility I had a dream that was quite threatening. I was walking along the top of a high wall, carrying some items that included a pack of cards. As I came to the end of the wall I realised that the wall had a gap of about one metre in it before another wall began. It looked easy enough to step across from one wall onto the top of the next, but then I realised how high off the ground I was. Fear rose up within me.

I couldn't balance myself very well because I was carrying many items in both arms. I had to rely solely on my ability to take a small leap from one wall to the other, using my body to balance myself without the aid of my arms. I thought I could do this, but as I neared the edge of the gap I began to suffer vertigo. I had a mild panic attack and began to swoon a little. Then I regained my composure and began to step out to cross the gap. Again, as I attempted to do this my nerves failed me. I began to perspire and fear started to really take over.

I could imagine myself tumbling off the wall to the ground far below. At one stage I almost threw up my arms in despair letting all the items fall. At this juncture I imagined the deck of cards (which probably stood for "taking a gamble") gently fluttering down to the ground. Then I remembered I'd been reading about Lucid Dreaming and taking control of nightmares. I instantly told myself, "This is only a bad dream, and I won't fall off; I can do it."

As I said this I leaped across the gap, landing safely on the other wall, still with all the items intact. In fact as I did this I felt quite a bit of bravado in doing so, and knew that I would be successful. I also "knew" I had some control in the situation.

This is a simple but encouraging experience of how we can alter some of the conditions within our dreams. I instinctively "knew" that the dream was going to end up in disaster for me, until I took over and altered its outcome. Now this isn't any great spiritual issue at all, but it's an indicator of how we can possibly influence our dreams. It's on this kind of basis that children are helped in controlling their nightmares.

Of course, it won't work at all if the nightmares are demonically induced, but it could have some ramifications for general sleeping experiences. Some of the earlier researchers into this phenomena used the term "Lucid" dreaming because it had the connotation of "inner spiritual insight". In other words they were saying that when you are seeing or experiencing something bad in a dream you can will yourself to look away from the disagreeable situation, and with your "second, inner sight" see something else around you that's pleasant and non-threatening.

But there's a down side to all this. Because earlier researchers used the term "lucid" to mean "inner sight" it quickly gave their opponents ammunition to cry "occultism". In some ways this was quite valid because in some religious practices like incubation there's an element of attempting to procure some visitation or benefit from the dream experience. If we try to do this to simply increase our spirituality we're likely to find ourselves being manipulated by unfriendly spiritual powers.

In the Tibetan Book of the Dead, an occult writing dealing with after-death experiences, it's actually stated, "the character of any dream can be changed or transformed by willing that it shall be". And just as it's true that an angel can be made by the Lord to enter a dream, so no doubt Satan can do this and allow demons to enter a dream. In fact in New Age circles it's not uncommon to find workshops and conferences on dreams dealing with this very aspect.

It's most probable that Lucid or so-called "creative dreaming" will take its place alongside yoga, meditation and channelling as a way of a healing disease in the body - or so it's presumed. We're already aware of this type of thing when we hear someone say, "Imagine that your headache, or arthritis, or cancer is gradually disappearing". The belief is that if you do this while dreaming you'll actually turn the illness into health by the power of the

imagination. By intentionally dreaming that you're well and healthy, even though you're sick and bed-ridden, you would stir up the latent power of healing within you. This is pure New Age methodology.

We need to be cautious and use great discernment in this area; it's full of quicksand! Once you experience the power and even the "thrill" of controlling your inner life you may be prone to dig deeper and thereby uncover some nasty dormant powers. Again, it comes back to the issue of soul versus spirit. Which of the two is most dominant in our life, and how much authority does the Holy Spirit have in us?

In my dream described earlier, I wasn't deliberately looking for an experience of lucid dreaming, but it did happen to me. It may well be possible, and quite within safe boundaries, to use lucid dreaming as a way of dealing with nightmares for example. As I explain in the next chapter, as Christians we do this in various ways probably without even realising it.

However, there may not be anything wrong or dangerous at all in using this method to solve problems, and even invite God to speak to us about certain issues, all while we dream. How often have you been troubled by something, perhaps a family or pastoral issue, and before drifting off to sleep you've committed it to the Lord? Most of us have done this fairly often. But did you bother to record any dreams that came that night?

Most likely, the Lord was giving some answer or insight to the issue at hand through our dreams, but we failed to recognise this. It's quite amiss to commit some issue to the Lord before going off to sleep, and then not to believe that He'll actually give an answer to it. We all probably fail in this area more than we realise.

So before going off to sleep, commit your problem to Him, asking Him to speak to you about it during the night season. He will, according to Psalm 16:7. **"I will bless the Lord, who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the night seasons."**

If you have trouble remembering your dreams then ask the Lord to wake you up so you can recall or record it. It does work! Now, while this might not sound like "lucid" dreaming it is in fact a form of it. There have been times when I've been faced with pressing pastoral issues and upon committing it to the Lord before sleep, have found that I've been confronted with "choices" in my dream. Could this be a way of using creative, lucid dreaming to find a beneficial outcome to the problem? I think so.

It's even recorded that the invention of the mechanical lockstitch sewing machine was the direct result of a dream. In 1844 Elias Howe was unsuccessfully struggling how to incorporate the eye into the needle of the machine; all of his attempts failed because he had the eye in the centre of the needle.

In his dream he was captured by natives who threatened to kill him if he didn't complete his project. In the dream he was taken to an execution spot, when all of a sudden he noticed that his captors each had spears with eye-shaped holes in them, near the points! He had solved the problem; sprang out of bed, recorded the details, and thereby invented the eye-shaped lockstitch sewing needle still in use today!

If such things can be solved with issues to do with the world, imagine how much more the Lord wants us to appreciate what He will do through dreams!

Chapter 14

DREAMS AND MORALITY

Can we influence our dreams? In some cases we can, although it's actually our moral position that does this. Let me explain.

There have been times over the years (when dreaming) I've been tempted to sin. It might've been to kill or murder someone, or lie or steal. In the language of dreams these could have been purely symbolic. But there have been a few times when the temptation to sexually sin has arisen. Basically it's been when another woman in a dream is trying to seduce me, or at least tempt me to sin with her. In each case, I recall their being an immediate state of inertia as I surveyed the situation. The "flesh" in my dream was tempted, but after recovering from the shock my inner morality came into action.

I distinctly remember one occasion when after the temptation was presented I sensed my flesh growing weak in resisting. Then suddenly my inner-man came through very strongly and my conscience took over and resisted the temptation. In other words my in-built Christian morality rose up to oppose the temptation. As this happened I actually felt strength return to me, and in the long term my inner-man became much stronger as a result.

I share his personal account to show that our dream-life will often disclose how we really are within. If my moral stance wasn't strong and if I wasn't committed to my marriage covenant with my wife, then the dream and the temptation would've found any weakness and exposed it. How we react in dreams is a good indicator of our morality.

I took heart from such episodes to realise that my morality in this area is on a good foundation. We all know that in dreams we are prone to do whatever we want, in a sense. We can do almost anything in a dream and not suffer the literal consequences of it. We can murder, steal, commit adultery or whatever, and get away with it in the dream, simply because it is a dream. So when our conscience comes to the party and acts as a defence against such temptations it's a good sign that our conscience and morals are in a healthy state.

So, I wonder if this is the case with our conscience, could it be that our spiritual calling will also influence our dreams? Imagine the case in a dream when you're tempted to compromise a spiritual truth, and a struggle insures within you. Your particular calling and anointing will then be tested to see if you're truly committed to it.

As Christians we've probably all had dreams where we've used our anointing to rebuke a demon, raise the dead, proclaim the gospel, etc. The strength of how we do this in the dream is probably an indicator of how deep our calling has gone. In other words the dream is mirroring back to us what our spiritual condition is really like within. Our response to such occasions might come as a shock to us if we think we're more than we are spiritually. We may think we're faithful to our calling and have inner spiritual strength - but be certain, your dreams will find you out!

Dreams have a way of showing us the naked truth of our inner state, whether it be about our morals or our spirituality. I've found that when I grow in the Lord through study or ministry or whatever, a dream will come along to test it. This isn't a regular occurrence, but I do know

that at times dreams come to see if what I've learned in the natural will stand up in my inner life. This might be because in the natural world we're usually in control of things. However, in the dream-state we're usually the "victims". So once more the dream serves as a reflection of who we really are within.

Try this out for yourself next time you sense a personal significant spiritual growth. Be alert about your dreams, record them, and see if in them a testing is evident putting to scrutiny what you've just grown in.

In this way it's apparent that we can influence our dreams, both through the standard of our morality, and the depth of our calling in God. In fact it's probably not at all amiss to suggest that the Lord gives us dreams to test what we've learnt spiritually. Many of our dreams may be of this nature. Perhaps we're missing some important insights by not paying attention to this type of dream?

There's a general spiritual principle that goes like this: God won't allow you to move on into the next stage of your calling until you've passed the tests He's already given you.

Chapter 15

INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS

This topic is a very disturbing one, so I encourage you to pray as you read this section. It deals with visitations of two demon powers that come in the night season, and who are often linked to dreaming.

Pastoral evidence shows that many women have experienced attacks by the incubi demons, although it's rarely discussed. Many ministers and pastors refute the possibility of a demon having sex with a human. However, biblically and pastorally the evidence is there.

The names "incubus" and "succubus" are familiar terms in psychiatry where dreams of being sexually harassed are identified with these. In fact this isn't really a psychological problem, or even one to do with nightmares. The incubi and succubi are demonic forces that sexually visit their victims at night. The incubus is a "male" demon who attacks and violates women, and the succubi is a "female" demon who seduces and attacks men. In some cases it's been known that the male incubi demon will visit men for the purpose of sodomy. The succubi also will engage in lesbian attacks upon women.

I'm writing about this because many Christians believe that these visitations are nothing more than horrid nightmares. In some cases it seems that the nightmare (which is from the Latin meaning to "lie upon") is just that - a bad dream. But occasionally this is nothing to do with bad dreams, but can be an actual demonic visitation. The attacks from these spirits may begin by the victim having sexually arousing dreams, but that's only a vehicle for what comes next. I've written a small booklet on the subject that explains the history and methods of attack by these demons. It also gives practical advice on how to defeat these demons in the name of Jesus.

Here I want to confine the discussion to dreams, and how demons will use these. Basically if a person has a loose mind, one that is prone to fantasise, and lacks self-discipline, they

may become a target for these powers. Those who have indulged in excessive sexual activity are also likely to experience such visitations.

These by themselves are not the only factors that will draw a night demon to visit, as such issues as occultic involvement and unconfessed sexual sin will also determine whether a person is a candidate. Therefore it's important to guard your dream-life by committing your time of sleep to the Lord.

A night demon will often approach a woman on her own at night, bringing with it the ability to sexually arouse her. The attack is quite direct, but it may start with a dream of some sort that quickly turns into a nightmare. Depending on what has allowed the incubi to come, the woman may begin to feel an actual weight on the bed with her, or even upon her own body. In advanced stages the defilement by the demon is as real as a normal physical sexual encounter, although much more violent.

After some sort of sexually unpleasant experience has occurred the woman will feel great shame and much fear. Unable to confide in her husband or a friend, the problem only compounds - these demons thrive on the secrecy this kind of attack fosters. Night and sleep become times of great anxiety for the woman, and her dream-life becomes a time of nightmarish proportions.

In the case of the succubi attack upon a man, the method of attack is nearly always through the mind. The demon will implant sexually impure thoughts allowing the mind of the man to fantasise until he's unable to resist the images that come.

When a man is under this kind of attack he's likely to think the experience was just a dream. Some men, especially young men, think it's just part of their manhood development. The thoughts of sexually attractive women, combined with an actual experience of sexual satisfaction, only lead the man deeper into the trap. It's often only later that he realises this is no longer a dream but an actual physical experience. Confusion can then grip him and he's torn between finding the experience satisfying, and yet fearful at the same time.

It's imperative that we understand these demons principally use dreams as a first method of attack. So guarding our dream-life is vital.

The average born-again believer shouldn't worry unnecessarily about these attacks as the demons can only operate if there's a legal ground for them to do so. Living a righteous life before the Lord is the best protection. But if there's unconfessed sexual sin, or unsavoury sexual practices, as well as a weak mind with a lack of self-discipline, then the prospects will increase for a visitation.

Medical researchers have found what they consider as abnormal sleep patterns from people supposedly suffering from nightmares. In most cases the similarity with attacks from incubi and succubi are striking. Generally psychologists don't believe there are any such things as evil spirits so the responses they collect from nightmare sufferers are regarded as paranoid or psychotic-like behaviour.

However for Christians who are aware of these demonic powers the responses the sufferers give are more like statements of a demonic attack!

Subject	Description of the dream or nightmare
Female	Feelings of malevolence; paranoid fantasies, " <i>He is watching everything</i> ", " <i>It's alive...</i> "; Hybrid (a mixture of human and animal) creatures in the dream
Female	Bleeding uterus; the mind flooded with anxiety.
Female	Feels her anatomy is vulnerable to attack.
Male	Vivid fantasies of violence combined with sexual fantasies; a sense of mutilation of the private organs.
Male	Pre-occupation with anatomy and sex.
Male	Malevolent response; "medieval drawing of demons" come into the mind.

While this doesn't prove that these nightmares were actual demonic attacks, the content is very similar to demon intrusion. Note some of the things seen in the nightmares, such as: Sensing a malevolent presence, seeing hybrid creatures, having a sense of extreme vulnerability, or the deliberate drawing of demons to a person.

Many Christians including ministers and pastors simply don't believe these things happen. In over 30 years in ministry I've counselled a number of people, usually women, who've experienced vivid attacks from unseen but very "real" spiritual beings who've sexually violated them. In many cases dreams or nightmares have been a part of the initial attack. We need to be more pastorally sensitive about this issue, and more discerning of the dream-state.

Here I've listed some things to watch for in dreams that might indicate either an incubus or succubus attack.

Are there recurring sexual fantasies?

Is there's sexual symbolism in the dream?

If you're a female do you feel a weight on the bed or on your body during your sleep or dream?

If you're a male have you felt the physical sensations of sex?

As far as your aware, do these begin with a dream?

After the dream, do you wake up feeling shame and fear?

Is there both a mixture of enjoyment yet uncleanness (particularly in the case of men)?

Are you beginning to dread going off to sleep?

Have the visits begun to materialise in the room and not just appear in your dream?

Experiencing some of these point to the strong possibility that you're the victim of an attack from a night demon. In my book I explain how to deal with these intrusions. There is help in the name of the Lord Jesus but it's also important to understand why these demons come.

I introduced this distasteful topic here because it's part of the dream-world, and we need to be alerted to the fact. For the record, I've found that victory in the name of Jesus is assured and lasting. But many people are very reluctant to share their experiences because of shame or ridicule. Those of us who are in the pastoral ministry and who are interested in the dream-state need to be aware of this particular problem - and how to set the victims free.

Chapter 16

THE SEERS

In the first book of Samuel it's recorded that **"Formerly in Israel when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: 'Come let us go to the Seer', for he who is now called prophet was formerly called a Seer"** (1 Sam 9:9).

I firmly believe that the function of the Seer is returning to the Church in these days. The Lord has already restored the office and function of Prophet to us, but there is already growing the complementary work of a true Seer in the spirit.

This isn't to denigrate or reduce the importance of the office of Prophet amongst us, but I believe there'll be a clearer distinction between the work of a Prophet and that of a Seer. Although the two do overlap in their ministry giftings I hope to show that there's also a marked difference.

There are two Hebrew words for "seer".

Strong's H7200. *ra'ah* (pronounced raw-aw). A primitive root; to see, literally or figuratively (in numerous applications, direct and implied, transitively, intransitively and causatively): - advise self, appear, approve, behold, certainly, consider, discern, (make to) enjoy, have experience, gaze, take heed, indeed, joyfully, lo, look (on, one another, one on another, one upon another, out, up, upon), mark, meet, be near, to perceive, present, provide, regard, have respect, (cause to, let) see, shew, sight of others, spy, stare, surely, think, view, visions.

Strong's H2374. *chozeh* (pronounced kho-zeh'). Active participle of H2372; a beholder in vision; also a compact (as looked upon with approval): - agreement, prophet, see that, seer, [star-] gazer.

One of the things that a Seer does is to bring "light" into a situation. This light, or insight carries with it is certain knowledge. So in a sense, just as light conquered darkness, so bringing light into any situation is knowledge conquering confusion or ignorance. It's interesting to note that in Genesis

chapter 1 we find God bringing order out of chaos (Genesis 1:2), light where there was none (verses 3-4), and introducing knowledge (Genesis 2:9).

In the creation texts we also find God as the Primeval Provider. He was the first to “see” and know the value of “seeing correctly”. This is reinforced five times in the first creation account of Genesis chapter 1; God saw that it was good.

The word “provider” is made up of two words “pro” and “video”. “Pro” means before, and “video” means to see. Therefore God is the “before seer”. He sees what is required before it’s needed. He is the Pre-Seer.

The Lord didn't just bring the universe into being at a whim of His fancy. He pre-saw it in His divine mind and spoke it into existence. He alone is the ultimate Seer.

There is a sequence involved here that goes like this:

CHAOS leads to **ORDER**

DARKNESS leads to **LIGHT**

IGNORANCE leads to **KNOWLEDGE**

By the fifth century BC, the Greeks had linked these thoughts together and used the word “theorein”, which means both to see and to know. Knowledge equals vision, and vice versa. As this concept developed it's no wonder that pagan religions ended up worshipping the Sun (light) or idolizing Knowledge.

Today in Western society we're still strongly influenced by the concept of idolizing knowledge. The ultimate heresy to do with this is found in the statement that science (and knowledge) will eventually fix all of humanity's problems.

In 1 Samuel 9:9 we're told that "formerly in Israel when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: “Come let us go to the Seer”; for he who is now called a Prophet was formerly called a Seer." What then is the difference between the Prophet and the Seer, and why was there a name change? There's no Biblical reason given why there was a name change at this stage. Some believe that the Seer was one who received prophetic revelation mainly through images, while the modern-day Prophet receives revelation via a combination of images, feelings, words of knowledge, etc.

Certain prophetic people today say their prophetic knowledge comes most commonly through images and “internal visions” in the mind. It probably depends on the personality of the individual. It's been suggested that true Seers in the Spirit tend to be “right brain” people: that is, they're intuitive, empathetic and acutely spiritual. The left hand side of the brain is mainly responsible for logic, reason and concepts in our thought processes. The right brain hemisphere has more to do with intuition, creativity, spirituality, etc.

But probably the true difference between a Seer and a Prophet is that the former has the gift to actually perceive something that has been momentarily unveiled by God. The Prophet also of course perceives hidden things, but it's more of a “revelation” that comes to them through various means - a word of knowledge, an “internal vision”, an image, etc. But the Seer is allowed by God to see something manifest before them - it's a literal “unveiling” or “uncovering”, often to do with eternal events.

The Lord unveils something and allows the Seer to actually “see” right into the spirit realm. This has usually got something to do with some great truth or working out of God's plan. We see this in the case of Balaam.

“So he took up his oracle and said: “The utterance of Balaam the some of Beor, and the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened: the utterance of him who hears the words of God and has the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, who falls down with eyes wide open: I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel”.

(Numbers 24:15-17)

Balaam sees hundreds of years into the future, yet it was happening right before his eyes. This paradox is expressed in his words when he says, “I see Him, but not now: I behold Him, but not near”. He was of course seeing and speaking about the Lord Jesus, who was yet to be incarnate on the earth.

There is a Hebrew word for this ability to see something that has been disclosed; it's the word “galah”.

Strong's number H1540. **“Galah”**. A primitive root, meaning “to denude”; by implication to “exile”; fig meaning **“to reveal**, advertise, appear (carry, lead, go) captive, depart, disclose, discover, exile, be gone, open, plainly, remove, reveal, shamelessly, **show**, surely, tell, **uncover**.”

This is more the realm of the true Seer in the Spirit. The Lord gives one the ability to see something that has eternal ramifications and then to prophesy them. This is a marked difference from the prophetic person who has a word of knowledge or “sees” an image on the screen of their mind and then speaks it out. These usually have more to do with issues relating to people's own needs than to eternal issues.

There are of course many occasions when the ability to “see” like a Seer is given. A prophetic person in the church meeting might see the heavens unveiled briefly, and tell the people present. In a prayer meeting someone is allowed by the Lord to see what is going to happen to their local community or nation, and they intercede about it.

These are reasonably commonplace, but they're distinct from the true Seer as prophesying is to a true Prophet. All can prophesy, but not all are called to be Prophets. Many might see from time to time like a Seer, but not all are called to be Seers.

From time to time there have been reports of entire congregations seeing into the spiritual realm and being allowed to see the heavenlies. Generally such occurrences happen during a time of high praise and worship. The heavens are peeled back and a number of people begin to see the same thing. Then suddenly many people partake of the same heavenly scene. When these instances are analysed (if you can do such a thing!) we find that what was seen was usually the glory of the Lord enthroned on high, maybe with angelic attendants surrounding Him, etc. It's as if the “spirit of seeing” comes upon the people and they're allowed to view this great spectacle. But I wouldn't call this a true Seer's experience.

What the congregation saw might have been awesome and even overwhelming, but it was something unusual allowed by the Lord in His grace. A true Seer might also have such experiences, but theirs has an added dimension to it. They not only see scenes of the

heavenly throne room so to speak, but are also allowed to look into such events as the coming revival, the last days, the tribulation period, etc.

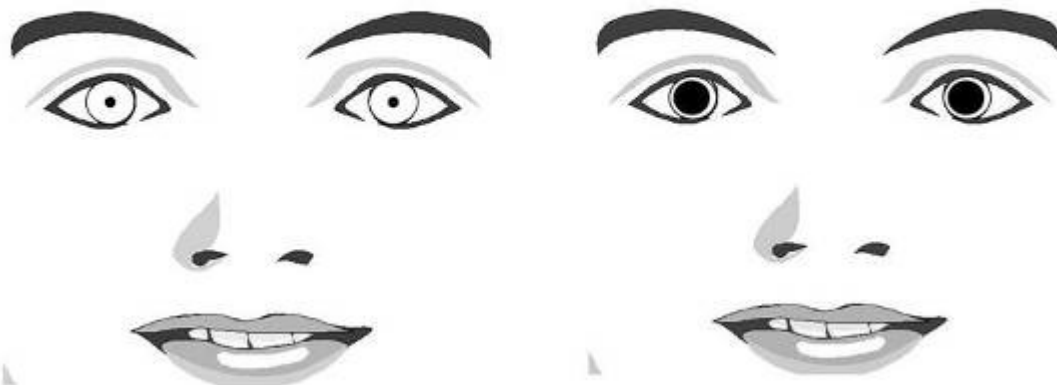
In other words, they see more than others will. This is because the congregation had the “spirit of seeing” come upon them out of the goodness of the Lord’s heart, whereas the Seer receives revelation as a necessary part of his or her calling. I would look for such things when discerning whether or not a person is a true Seer.

I would like to look at an interesting aspect of the Seer’s ability that has a natural prototype, so to speak. It’s the physical human eye, and how it reacts and responds to certain situations. When we speak of “seeing in the spirit” or being “a Seer” we’re obviously using language that deals primarily with the normal ability to see with the human eye. This of course is a well-known principle found in Scripture.

“The spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.” (1 Cor 15:46)

As in the natural, so in the spiritual. This Biblical principle has an interesting application in regard to Seers, and it’s the human eye that gives us the clue. So let’s look at the following diagram.

Which one of these women's faces appeals to you the most?



Research shows that the majority of people, whether male or female, will choose the face on the right. Why? The face shows the pupils are dilated (enlarged). This appeals to us because it’s a basic human instinct derived from our very early childhood. If you place a piece of paper with two large black dots on it in front of a baby, the baby will smile and show delight. If those two dots are surrounded by the outline of a face, the child will still smile.

Now, if you remove that artwork and replace it with a person’s face without the two eyes dilated, the child usually doesn’t respond. Even if it’s a drawing of the mother’s own face, the baby will usually not respond unless the eyes are enlarged.

This has been used in nurseries to help babies feel content. Large pieces of white cardboard are suspended from the ceiling with nothing on them except an oval shape depicting a face and two large black dots. The babies respond to this with much delight.

Try it yourself in another way. Look at how many people communicate with a young baby. They put their face close to the child, make goo-goo noises, and open their eyes wide as they stare into the child's face. Inevitably the baby will quickly respond with much delight and giggling. It's because research shows that our pupils dilate when we show genuine emotion.

So now we can see why most people choose the face of the woman on the right. It reminds us of early childhood and the pleasure and emotion attached to it. So what's this got to do with Seers and the spiritual?

When a person expresses genuine emotion their eyes will dilate quite naturally. When we see this happen to a person we're instinctively drawn to them - just as the baby is to the wide-open eyes of the mother as she communicates with the child. Researchers have found that our subconscious is very sensitive to the dilation of another person's eyes.

And it's also true that when we experience emotion ourselves, our eyes will express this - they become dilated. Another person recognises this in us, instinctively knows that we are genuine, and will respond to us. So there's a two-way act of unspoken communication going on; the eyes being the mirrors of our soul at this point.

If however you pretend to show emotion your eyes will betray you. They will not dilate. No matter how much you pretend to express emotion you would not be able to convince a sensitive person - they will see it in your eyes. I believe this has a spiritual parallel.

When a Seer has a genuine spiritual revelation to impart, others will be naturally drawn to this, recognising truth partly by the dilation of the natural eyes (as well as spiritual discernment). After all, a genuine spiritual experience certainly is emotional!

As well as this I believe that the "spiritual eyes" also "dilate". If we're sensitive and discerning in the Holy Spirit I believe we can detect whether a person is a genuine Seer or not. Not only will we discern the truth by the evidence of their natural eyes, we can also learn to "see" the condition of their spiritual eyes.

This of course is something we have to learn to do. It's far more than just having the gift of discernment operating. Here we're talking about a high level of spiritual application - something that generally the Church is weak in. Nevertheless I believe it can be fostered; "how to do it" is the big question. Most probably those who are already working in this field do this quite naturally and don't recognise "how" they do it. It's a little like asking a prophetic person how they "see" in the Spirit. They'll normally say they "just do". They find it hard to explain because they're so used to "doing it". Often though they haven't actually sat down and thought through how they do this: it's something they've grown into and become comfortable with.

This used to frustrate me a lot when I'd ask someone how do they "see" in the Spirit, or how do they discern what's going on. I'd always draw a blank from them - they did it, but they couldn't explain it to me!

I believe the next big step in the maturing of the Church will be the impartation of "how to" move in the spiritual. In the 1970s there was quite a lot of teaching on how to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. There were books, conferences and workshops that helped people to interpret tongues, how to hear the word of knowledge, how to prophesy, etc. Then in the

1980s there was quite a bit of exposure in dealing with the demonic realm and “how to” discern whether a demon was present, and how to cast it out, etc,

Now I sense that time is coming when we’re going to receive an anointing to teach the “how to” in relation to deeper spiritual things. It certainly won’t be teaching linked to the rational and logic based type of knowledge. This will be something quite different. It will include the coming forth of the Teachers of Revelation.

It will have to be learned by the rules of the Holy Spirit. It will be by spiritual intuition and revelation. There’ll be much frustration for a while as we learn to put aside some of our rational thought processes, but it will be exhilarating! The Biblical Prophets seem to have been anointed with both the ability to see into the spiritual realm, as well as to operate in the general gifts of the Spirit, such as words of knowledge, discernment, etc.

There are in the modern Church many mature Prophets who do the same. It’s a pity in some ways that the prophetic ministry is properly seen by the average person to be one more associated with words, rather than with revelatory vision. In the next few years we can look forward to seeing an increase in prophetic ministries to rise to new heights in their calling. They will begin to see into the heavens in a new way. No longer will they simply receive “an impression” or “a word” about some illness in a person’s life, etc, but they will begin to see like Jesus saw.

It’s interesting to note that Jesus as the Supreme Seer, had His revelations given by His heavenly Father: **“For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does...”** John 5:20

A sign of spiritual maturity is when we begin to have revelations from the Father, and not simply by the Holy Spirit. Now obviously the Holy Spirit is directly involved with the Father but there’s a tendency for many in the prophetic to keep on drawing from the Holy Spirit for revelation, rather than seeking the Father. I say this only to encourage us to look higher for what heaven has to reveal, not to disparage those in the prophetic.

Jesus was shown what His Father was about. He was in such a place with Abba God that the Father showed Him the unseen things. This is the ability of the true Seer in the Spirit; they will increase in the gifting to such a point that they constantly see into the unseen realms.

As the End of the Age rapidly draws to a close, great revelations will be given to the people of the Lord. It will require maturity of spirit and soul for us to rightly discern what comes forth. Let us therefore aim for maturity in our inner-man for there will be much deceit out there, and many who think themselves to be “spiritual” will in fact be vulnerable to the trickery of false spirits.

Will we receive the Seers when they come forth? Most of the Biblical Prophets were of course also Seers into the eternal things of God. When we read their writings one of the striking things we find is the awesomeness of what will come upon us in the Last Days. Generally the majority of the Church rejects true Seers. They bring forth what God is showing them, and often it’s not soothing.

How we react or respond to their message will be a clear sign of our own maturity in God. It was surprising to find how many Christians reacted against instead of responding to Nita

Johnson when she ministered in Australia in 1997. I strongly encourage you to read what she as a Seer in the Spirit has written of.

Might I also add that there are not just Seers who happened to be Prophets, but there are also Seers who are Apostles as well. The Church is built upon these two ministries (Ephesians 2:20) both of which will increasingly incorporate the gifts of Seer.

This "seeing" would not be occasional. It will not hold back the Truth. What the Seers hear, they will tell. What they see, even though it causes them pain to see, they will reveal. And they will have counted the cost and laid down their ambition, their approval from others, and even their lives if required - all to be the watchman of the Lord and the tellers of the purposes of their God in their hour.

Will we receive them, and in doing so find for ourselves a place of shelter in the days to come?

APPENDIX 1

"The Law of Passivity" by Jesse Penn-Lewis.

"I also labour, striving according to His work, which works in me mightily". Col.1:29

This is only one of the scriptures that clearly show the necessity for the full active use of the whole outer man in God's service. God works mightily-I work mightily. That is absolutely contrary to the idea many have that God works through a man like water goes through a pipe-simply passes power through him while he remains passive!

As Christians, we perhaps know little of spiritists, probably have never read their books, or come in contact with them, and it is not always recognized that those who practice spiritism do really have communication with spirits-evil spirits. Although there are failures, deceptions, and even quackery in spiritism, these only serve to cover up the real work of Satan. You will find, however, that the one condition and principle which mediums have to fulfil in order to obtain spirit communication and working is this: Every part of the whole being must be perfectly passive and out of action. The brain must be blank, the faculties dormant, the will "let go," and the body passive. This absolute passivity is the fundamental law for the working of evil spirits through human beings.

A minister told me of a girl medium whom he visited with. He asked her how she became one, and she replied that she "sat in a dark room once a day, and gave herself up to the spirits." They say they are good spirits, but the fact is, there are no good spirits with whom you can obtain any communication. By dismissing these things as "nothing" we have missed understanding the law by which these evil spirits work, the "law of passivity." There is not one sentence in Paul's epistles where he tells you to become "passive." Every time he speaks of the Holy Spirit there is a reference to activity on the part of the believer. "I labour, striving according to His working." God works "according to law," and the law for the working of the Holy Spirit is "active co-operation." The law for the working of evil spirits is passive submission. God desires "fellow workers with Him:" evil spirits want to use you as a passive instrument.

Question. What about yielding ourselves to God? Answer. You will not find a single place in the Bible where the command or principle is laid down that your faculties are to be out of

use. The Apostle Paul speaks of spiritual understanding: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened." Nor are you ever told in God's Word that your will is to be passive. You are constantly enjoined to have an active will - "put on" - "put off" - "lay hold" - "fight"! If then, passivity is the "law" for evil supernatural powers to work, and you as a believer (knowingly or unknowingly) fulfil that law in any degree, they will work.

Passivity will account for much disappointment in the spiritual life. For instance, you wanted to be guided by God, and you thought He would tell you, supernaturally, what to do; but He did not, and you were disappointed, or thought you had sinned in some way. God has not done many things you asked or expected, because you failed to fulfil the law by which He has chosen to work. He manifests His power by working in and through you, not instead of you!

Many have supposed that if believers have power from God He will work without their co-operation, and consequently have dropped into a state of passivity, and that is the explanation for so much deception, on the one hand, and powerlessness, on the other. One section of the church is deceived with supernatural workings, and the other is powerless and inactive in God's service. God does not break His own law of cause and effect. If you touch a "live" wire, you will get an electric shock! As a believer, you must walk according to God's laws, then He will guard you. But there is a "law of passivity" which, if obeyed, enables evil spirits to work: and if children of God will persist in expecting God to move their bodies without their own volition, they fulfil that law; and all their devotion and claiming the protection of the blood of Christ will not save them from spiritist manifestations as they fulfil the law for producing them.

What is true surrender to God? You surrender sin, by dropping it: you surrender yourself - by giving up your whole being to be available in His service. "Yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead (Romans 6:13)." Not as a machine or an automaton. Actively obey God. You presented your members to sin once: now present them to God. Stand for Him, actively and fully, with every part of your being. "To whom ye yield yourselves.... his servants ye are" (Romans 6:16). Servants of God! What is a servant for, but to serve? Of what use is a passive servant? "I plead with you present all your faculties to Him as a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to Him (Romans 12:1, Weymouth)."

Question. How do you distinguish between the mind being passive and the mind being "silent" to God? Answer. The mind being "passive" means that it is sluggish and heavy, and unable to act and think: while the mind being "silent unto God" is simply an awakened, liberated mind refraining from healthy action in other directions, so as to be quiet before the Lord! The mind should, in its normal condition, be awake, but not full of rushing, uncontrollable thoughts. It should be always keenly alert to see the mind of the Spirit at the moment. By being awake to every duty and to everything in your environment - able to see, to watch, to catch, to think: ready to act as God gives you light, and moves in your spirit to the doing of His will.

Briefly, if the mind is purely "quiet" it is ready for action at any moment. When the mind is passive it is NOT FREE TO ACT. There is both a right and a wrong quietness. The first is best described as pliability to every indication of the will of God, so that, with ease, the believer turns, moment by moment, as directed by the Holy Spirit. The second-a wrong "quietness," or passivity-is allowing the mental and other faculties to lie dormant, which

makes the man as one acted upon by an unseen power, rather than one energized by the Holy Spirit intelligently to work with God. This comes about through having a mistaken idea of what being "channels only" or "instruments used by God" means, and this again is often the swinging to another extreme in fear of the activity of the "flesh."

The believer desiring to be "spiritual" sees clearly how the natural intellect and reason hinders the apprehension of the things of the Spirit, and so he imagines that the intellect must not be called into use, and some even take a pride in saying that they have "not been to college," and have had no "teaching of man" at all. All this swinging to extremes comes through the lack of teaching concerning the inner meaning of the cross, and the deeper knowledge of the cross that should come to the believer really progressing in the spiritual life.

The common idea that the Christian is "done with the cross" when he is justified by faith and has apprehended his judicial death with Christ prevents the Holy Spirit from leading the soul into Philippians 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 4:10-12 in their deepest meaning. In other words, the Christian assumes that he has entered a position through his justification-namely judicial "death"-where he only needs to draw upon the life of Christ-forgetting that the negative, or fellowship with the death of Christ, is the necessary complement of the positive inflow of the risen life of the Lord.

Consequently, he expects the Lord to add the "new" to the "old" without his progressively yielding the "old" to death to make room for the "new". (Romans 8:13)

What has this to do with wrong passivity? This: that the intellectual powers need to be brought under the death-work of the cross, so that the natural activity of the mind may cease. It is this soulish activity of mind which the spiritual man fears, but the remedy is not passivity-or refusing to use the mind-but the renewing of the mind through the death-power of the cross so that the "mind of Christ" becomes increasingly wrought into the believer, and he receives a "sound mind" - usable by the Holy Spirit to its fullest capacity. Then the reasoning powers will become more acute and alert than in the time of their soulish activity; and wisdom from above will take the place of the natural wisdom. See James 1:5; 3:17.

The outcome of wrong passivity is two-fold: First, a lack of intellectual power through the habit of not using the mind. Whereas the mental capacity of every child of God should reach its fullest development through the renewing of the Spirit. Second, all passivity of mind gives ground to evil powers to work upon the man, and to use him unknown to himself, for the Holy Spirit does not so much work upon as work with the believer, i.e., He seeks the whole man as a fully developed and intelligent co-worker, not merely a passive machine.

The believer is an "instrument," but not one passively wielded so much as intelligently energized, with every faculty awake and usable. Colossians 1:29 most concisely shows this, and Philippians 3:13. "I labour" means toil, and "stretching forward" speaks of every nerve and muscle-spiritual, mental and physical-at full bent in pressing on in the life of God. You ask if Satan can make an impression when the mind is "silent before God." Yes, if you allow the "silence" to drop into passivity, or inertness. You must learn to recognize how he makes impressions: first, by suggestions to the mind-thus indirectly influencing the spirit; second, by pressure on your spirit-thus indirectly influencing your mind.

Jesse Penn-Lewis

APPENDIX 2

Following is a comprehensive list of all the dreams and visions as recorded in the Old Testament, as well as those who had them (plus Trances) in New Testament times. The various charts and tables that follow are presented for use in further study.

DREAMS and VISIONS

found in the Old Testament

11 Dream accounts and 21 of Visions

Person	Experience	Account	Bible text
Abram	Vision	God's assurance given	Gen 15: 1
Abimelech	Dream	Sarah protected	Gen 20: 3 & 6
Jacob	Dream	Ladder up to heaven	Gen 28: 12-17
Jacob	Dream	Angel speaks	Gen 31: 10-11
Laban	Dream	Warning not to speak against Jacob	Gen 31: 24
Joseph	Dreams	Joseph's dreams of his destiny	Gen 37: 5-6 & 8-10 / 42: 9
Butler & Baker	Dreams	Dreams in Pharaoh's prison	Gen 40: 5-9 & 16
Pharaoh	Dream	Joseph interprets	Gen 41: 1-32
Israel / Jacob	Visions	Jacob told to go to Egypt	Gen 46: 2
Balaam	Visions	Balaam's oracle	Num 24: 4 & 16
Unknown	Dream	Dream of Gideon's victory	Judg 7: 13-15
Samuel	Vision	God calls young Samuel	1 Sam 3: 15
Nathan	Vision	Nathan speaks to David about the Temple	2 Sam 7: 17 1 Chron 17: 15
Solomon	Dream	God invites Solomon to ask for whatever he desires	1 Kgs 3: 5-15
Iddo	Visions	Seer at the time of Solomon	2 Chron 9: 29
Isaiah	Vision	Concerning Judah and Jerusalem	Isa 1: 1
Isaiah	Vision	A distressing insight	Isaiah 21: 2
Ezekiel	Visions	Revelations given during the Babylonian captivity	Ezek 1: 1
Ezekiel	Vision	Lifted up between heaven and earth	Ezek 8: 1-ff
Ezekiel	Vision	Taken in the Spirit to Chaldea	Ezek 11: 24
Ezekiel	Visions	Vision of the Temple	Ezek 40: 2ff
Ezekiel	Vision	The glory of the Lord	Ezek 43: 3
Nebuchadnezzar	Dreams	The king's troublesome dreams	Dan 2: 3-45 & 4: 5-37
Daniel	Dream and visions	The four Beasts	Dan 7: 1-27
Daniel	Vision	The Ram and Goat	Dan 8: 1-27 & 9: 21-27
Daniel	Vision	The Man of Glory and the appearance of Michael	Dan 10: 1-21
Amos	Visions (?)	Judgment	Amos 7: 1-4 & 8: 1 & 9: 1
Obadiah	Vision	Concerning Edom	Obad 1: 1
Nahum	Vision	Word against Nineveh	Nah 1: 1
Habakkuk	Vision	Word against Judah	Hab 2: 2-3
Zechariah	Visions (?)	Angels and End Time events	Zech 1: 8, 18 & 2: 1 & 4: 2 & 5: 1 & 6: 1

DREAMS, VISIONS and TRANCES found in the New Testament

2 accounts of Dreams, 8 of Visions, and 2 of Trances.

Person	Experience	Message imparted	Bible text
Joseph	Dreams	1. Assured of Mary's purity & calling 2. Flee to Egypt to escape Herod 3. Return to Nazareth from Egypt	Matt 1: 20 Matt 2: 13 Matt 2: 19-23
Wise Men	Dream	Warning about Herod's plot	Matt 2: 12
Paul	Vision	Christ's call to repent & follow Him	Acts 9: 3-9
Ananias	Vision	Told to go to Saul to witness to him	Acts 9: 10-16
Cornelius	Vision	Told to get Peter to go to Joppa	Acts 10: 3-6
Peter	Trance	Animals in sheet descends: Peter told to accept the Gentiles	Acts 10: 9-18 & 28
Paul	Vision	Call to go to Macedonia	Acts 16: 9
Paul	Vision	Assurance of God's grace & protection	Acts 18: 9-10
Paul	Trance	While praying at Jerusalem	Acts 22: 17
Paul	Vision	Promise of the Lord's presence & grace on his way to Rome	Acts 23: 11
Paul	Vision	Sees into the Third Heaven	2 Cor 12: 1-4
John	Multiple visions	End Time revelations	Rev 4: 1 - 22:11

SEERS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE

There are two Hebrew words for SEER:

Strong's reference number H2374.

chozeh, kho-zeh';

act. part. of Hebrew 2372; a beholder in vision;
also a compact (as looked upon with approval): agreement, prophet,
see that, seer, [star-] gazer.

Strong's reference number H7200.

ra'ah, raw-aw';

Hebrew: a prim. root; to see, lit. or fig.
advise self, appear, behold, consider, discern, have experience,
gaze, take heed, look, mark, see, sight of others, spy, stare, view, visions.

Person	Account	Bible text
Samuel	Samuel meets Saul	1 Sam. 9: 5-16
Zadok	David and Zadok	2 Sam 15: 27
Gad	King David's seer	2 Sam 24: 11
Heman	King David's seer	1 Chron 25: 5
Iddo	King Solomon's seer	2 Chron 9: 29
Hanani	King Asa's seer	2 Chron 16: 7
Asaph	King Hezekiah's seer	2 Chron 29: 30
Jeduthun	King Josiah's seer	2 Chron 35: 15
Amos	Amos, Amaziah & King Jeroboam	Amos 7: 12
Unknown	King Manasseh's seers	2 Chron 33: 18
Unknown	False seers at Ariel	Isaiah 29: 10
Unknown	False seers	Micah 3: 7

Hebrew words for "DREAMS"

H2472. chalowm, khal-ome'; or chalom, khal-ome'; from H2492; a dream: dreamer

H2492. chalam, khaw-lam'; a prim. root; prop. to bind firmly, also (through the fig. sense of dumbness) to dream:--(cause to) dreamer.

H2493. chelem, khay'-lem; from the root H2492; a dream:--dream.

Greek words for "DREAMS"

G1798. enupnion, en-oop'-nee-on; from G1722 and G5258; something seen in sleep, i.e. a dream (vision in a dream):--dream. G3677. onar, on'-ar; of uncertain source.; a dream:--dream.

Hebrew words for “VISIONS”

H2376. chezev, khay'-zev; from H2370; a sight:--look, vision.

H2377. chazown, khaw-zone'; from H2372; a sight (mentally)

i.e. a dream, revelation, or oracle:--vision.

H2380. chazuwth, khaw-zooth'; from H2372; a look; hence (fig.) striking appearance, revelation, agreement, notable (one), vision.

H2384. chizzayown, khiz-zaw-yone'; from H2372;

a revelation especially by dream:--vision.

H4236. machazeh, makh-az-eh'; from H2372; a vision:--vision.

H4758. mar'eh, mar-eh; from 7200, the act of seeing; also an appearance; a vision, appearance, form, to look upon, pattern, to see, sight, vision.

H4759. mar'ah, mar-aw'; fem. of 4758; a vision, a mirror, looking glass, vision.

H7203. ro'eh, ro-eh'; act. part. of H7200; a seer; but also a vision:--vision.

Greek words for “VISIONS”

G3701. optasia, op-tas-ee'-ah; visuality, an apparition:--vision.

G3705. horama, hor'-am-ah; from G3708; something gazed at, i.e. a spectacle (especially supernatural):--sight, vision.

G3706. horasis, hor'-as-is; from G3708; the act of gazing, i.e. (external) an aspect or an inspired appearance:--sight, vision.

Greek word for “TRANCE”

G1611. ekstasis, ek'-stas-is; from G1839; a displacement of the mind, i.e. bewilderment, "ecstasy":--be amazed, amazement, astonishment, trance.

OCCURRENCES OF KEY WORDS

“DREAM” and “DREAMS” occurs 95 times in the Bible.

In the Old Testament the usual word is chalown (H2472).

The New Testament word most frequently used is onar (G3677).

“DREAMER” and “DREAMERS” occurs 6 times.

The Old Testament word most often used is chalown (H2472).

There is no word In the New Testament.

“VISION” and “VISIONS” occurs 103 times in the Bible.

The most frequent Old Testament word is chazown (H2377)

The New Testament word most often used is horama (G3705)

“TRANCE” occurs 5 times in the Bible.

There is no word for “trance” in the Old Testament.

In the New Testament the word is ekstasis (G1611).

“SEER” and “SEERS” occurs 27 times.

The most used Hebrew word is chozeh (H2374).

There is no word found in the New Testament.

SOME FAMOUS DREAMS

These examples are included simply to show how influential dreams can be. If this is so in dealing with such things as worldly inventions, songs, etc. – just imagine the impact and importance of those that are God-given!

Paul McCartney is one of the most famous modern songwriters of all time. According to the Guinness Book of Records, his Beatles song "Yesterday" has the most cover versions of any song ever written and, according to record label BMI, was performed over seven million times during in the 20th century.

The tune for "Yesterday" came to Paul McCartney in a dream...the story goes like this: The Beatles were in London in 1965 filming one of their movies called Help! and McCartney was staying in a small attic room of his family's house on Wimpole Street. One morning, in a dream he heard a classical string ensemble playing, and, as McCartney tells it:

"I woke up with a lovely tune in my head. I thought, 'That's great, I wonder what that is?' There was an upright piano next to me, to the right of the bed by the window. I got out of bed, sat at the piano, found G, found F sharp minor 7th - and that leads you through then to B to E minor, and finally back to E. It all leads forward logically. I liked the melody a lot, but because I'd dreamed it, I couldn't believe I'd written it. I thought, 'No, I've never written anything like this before.' But I had the tune, which was the most magic thing!"

Otto Loewi (1873-1961), a German born physiologist, won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1936 for his work on the chemical transmission of nerve impulses. In 1903 Loewi had the idea that there might be a chemical transmission of the nervous impulse rather than an electrical one, which was the common held belief, but he was at a loss on how to prove it. He let the idea slip to the back of his mind until 17 years later he had the following dream.

According to Loewi: "The night before Easter Sunday of that year I awoke, turned on the light, and jotted down a few notes on a tiny slip of paper. Then I fell asleep again. It occurred to me at 6 o'clock in the morning that during the night I had written down something most

important, but I was unable to decipher the scrawl. The next night, at 3 o'clock, the idea returned. It was the design of an experiment to determine whether or not the hypothesis of chemical transmission that I had uttered 17 years ago was correct. I got up immediately, went to the laboratory, and performed a single experiment on a frog's heart according to the nocturnal design."

It took Loewi a decade to carry out a decisive series of tests to satisfy his critics, but ultimately the result of his initial dream induced experiment became the foundation for the theory of chemical transmission of the nervous impulse and led to a Nobel Prize! Dr. Loewi noted: "Most so called 'intuitive' discoveries are such associations made in the subconscious."

Friedrich August Kekulé von Stradonitz is a remarkable figure in the history of chemistry, specifically organic chemistry. Twice Kekulé had dreams that led to major discoveries!

Kekulé discovered the tetravalent nature of carbon, the formation of chemical/ organic "Structure Theory", but he didn't make this breakthrough by experimentation alone. He had a dream! As he described in a speech given at the German Chemical Society:

"I fell into a reverie, and lo, the atoms were gambolling before my eyes! Whenever, hitherto, these diminutive beings had appeared to me, they had always been in motion; but up to that time, I had never been able to discern the nature of their motion. Now, however, I saw how, frequently, two smaller atoms united to form a pair; how a larger one embraced the two smaller ones; how still larger ones kept hold of three or even four of the smaller; whilst the whole kept whirling in a giddy dance. I saw how the larger ones formed a chain, dragging the smaller ones after them, but only at the ends of the chain. The cry of the conductor: "Clapham Road," awakened me from my dreaming; but I spent part of the night in putting on paper at least sketches of these dream forms. This was the origin of the Structural Theory."

Later, he had a dream that helped him discover that the Benzene molecule, unlike other known organic compounds, had a circular structure rather than a linear one... solving a problem that had been confounding chemists:

"I was sitting writing in my textbook, but the work did not progress; my thoughts were elsewhere. I turned my chair to the fire and dozed. Again the atoms were gambolling before my eyes. This time the smaller groups kept modestly in the background. My mental eye, rendered more acute by the repeated visions of the kind, could now distinguish larger structures of manifold conformation; long rows sometimes more closely fitted together all twining and twisting in snake-like motion. But look! What was that? One of the snakes had seized hold of its own tail, and the form whirled mockingly before my eyes. As if by a flash of lightning I awoke; and this time also I spent the rest of the night in working out the consequences of the hypothesis."

The snake seizing its own tail gave Kekulé the circular structure idea he needed to solve the Benzene problem! Said an excited Kekulé to his colleagues, "Let us learn to dream!"

Madame C.J. Walker (1867-1919) is cited by the Guinness Book of Records as the first female American self-made millionaire. She was also the first member of her family born free. Madame Walker founded and built a highly successful African-American cosmetic company that made her a millionaire many times over. Walker was suffering from a scalp

infection that caused her to lose most of her hair in the 1890's. She began experimenting with patented medicines and hair-care products.

Then, she had a dream that solved her problems: "He answered my prayer, for one night I had a dream, and in that dream a big, black man appeared to me and told me what to mix up in my hair. Some of the remedy was grown in Africa, but I sent for it, mixed it, put it on my scalp, and in a few weeks my hair was coming in faster than it had ever fallen out. I tried it on my friends; it helped them. I made up my mind to begin to sell it."

Walker was an entrepreneur, philanthropist and social activist. She best sums up her rise from a childhood in the poor south to being the head of an international, multi-million dollar corporation in the following quote:

"I am a woman who came from the cotton fields of the South. From there I was promoted to the washtub. From there I was promoted to the cook kitchen. And from there I promoted myself into the business of manufacturing hair goods and preparations....I have built my own factory on my own ground."

Srinivasa Ramanujan (1887-1920) was one of India's greatest mathematical geniuses. He made substantial contributions to analytical theory of numbers and worked on elliptical functions, continued fractions, and infinite series. In 1914, he was invited in to Cambridge University by the English mathematician G.H. Hardy who recognized his unconventional genius. He worked there for five years producing startling results and proved over 3,000 theorems in his lifetime.

According to Ramanujan, inspiration and insight for his work many times came to him in his dreams...however in this particular case the dream involved a demon god! A Hindu goddess, named Namakkal, would appear and present mathematical formulae that he would verify after waking. Such dreams often repeated themselves and the connection with the dream world as a source for his work was constant throughout his life.

$$\frac{1}{\pi} = \frac{2\sqrt{2}}{9801} \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{(4k)!(1103 + 26390k)}{(k!)^{4396+4k}}$$

Ramanujan describes one of his dreams of mathematical discovery: "While asleep I had an unusual experience. There was a red screen formed by flowing blood as it were. I was observing it. Suddenly a hand began to write on the screen. I became all attention. That hand wrote a number of results in elliptic integrals. They stuck to my mind. As soon as I woke up, I committed them to writing."

Abraham Lincoln. President Abraham Lincoln recounted the following dream to his wife just a few days prior to his assassination: "About ten days ago, I retired very late. I had been up waiting for important dispatches from the front. I could not have been long in bed when I fell into a slumber, for I was weary. I soon began to dream.

I dreamt of great cries coming from the East Wing of the Whitehouse. There seemed to be a death-like stillness about me. Then I heard subdued sobs, as if a number of people were weeping. I thought I left my bed and wandered downstairs. There the silence was broken by

the same pitiful sobbing, but the mourners were invisible. I went from room to room; no living person was in sight, but the same mournful sounds of distress met me as I passed along. It was light in all the rooms; every object was familiar to me; but where were all the people who were grieving as if their hearts would break?

I was puzzled and alarmed. What could be the meaning of all this? Determined to find the cause of a state of things so mysterious and so shocking, I kept on until I arrived at the East Room, which I entered. There I met with a sickening surprise. Before me was a catafalque of soldiers, on which rested a corpse wrapped in funeral vestments. Around it were stationed soldiers who were acting as guards; and there was a throng of people, some gazing mournfully upon the corpse whose face was covered, others weeping pitifully.

'Who is dead in the White House?' I demanded of one of the soldiers "The President" was his answer; "he was killed by an assassin!" Then came a loud burst of grief from the crowd, which awoke me from my dream."

Lincoln ascribed powerful meanings to his dreams. In one of his recurring dreams in particular he considered foretelling a sign of major events soon to occur. He had this dream the night before his assassination. On the morning of that lamentable day, President Lincoln was discussing matters of the war with General Grant during a cabinet meeting and believed that big news from General Sherman on the front would soon arrive. When Grant asked why he thought so, Lincoln responded:

"I had a dream last night; and ever since this war began I have had the same dream just before every event of great national importance. It portends some important event that will happen very soon."

His friend and law partner, Ward Hill Lamon, noted that Byron's "The Dream" was one of Lincoln's favourite poems and he often heard him repeat the following lines:

Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off waking toils,
They do divide our being.

DuPont, Kevlar and the Dream. During the Gulf War, a kevlar vest-making machine at the DuPont, the manufacturer's factory, kept breaking down. It was a dream that helped an engineer figure out a solution.

Kevlar vests are hi-tech bulletproof vests and because they were in huge demand during the Gulf War a special high-speed machine was set up to create them. Unfortunately for DuPont and the soldiers, it kept breaking down. Engineers could not figure out what was going wrong. Finally, one night one of the engineers had a dream. He dreamt he was actually part of the machine, and saw water spraying all over the place, along with hoses and springs. When he woke up, he realized that the hoses must be collapsing, and that springs would help keep them open. His co-workers were sceptical, but when they investigated the issue, they realized it was true. The dream saved DuPont millions of dollars, and probably many lives as well.

J.W. Dunne (British theorist 1875-1949): *What Is Time?* It occurred in 1898, when I was staying at a hotel in Sussex. I dreamed one night that I was having an argument with one of the waiters as to what was the correct time. I asserted that it was half-past four in the afternoon; he maintained that it was half-past four in the middle of the night. With the apparent illogicality peculiar to all dreams, I concluded that my watch must have stopped; and, on extracting that instrument from my waistcoat pocket, I saw, looking down on it, that this was precisely the case. It had stopped - with the hands at half-past four. With that I awoke.

The dream had been a peculiar one...and the net result of it all was that I lit a match to see whether the watch had really stopped. To my surprise it was not, as it usually is, by my bedside. I got out of bed, hunted round, and found it lying on the chest of drawers. Sure enough, it had stopped, and the hands stood at half-past four.

On coming downstairs next morning, I made straight for the nearest clock, with the object of setting the watch right. For if, as I supposed, it had stopped during the previous afternoon, and had merely been rewound at some unknown hour of the night, it was likely to be out by several hours.

To my absolute amazement I found that the hands had lost only some two or three minutes - about the amount of time which had elapsed between my waking from the dream and rewinding the watch. This suggested, of course, that the watch had stopped at the actual moment of the dream. The latter was probably brought about by my missing the accustomed ticking. But - how did I come to see, in that dream, that the hands stood, as they actually did, at half-past four?

Muslims come to faith through Dreams and Visions

The following is an excerpt from National and International Religion Report.

More and more Muslims are having dreams and visions of Christ, Christian ministries say. There is increasing evidence that the supernatural is playing a role in drawing Muslims to Christ.

Campus Crusade for Christ has received thousands of letters from Muslims, many of whom claim to have had a similar dream of Christ, according to the ministry's radio broadcast office in northern Africa. In the dream, Jesus appears and tells people, "I am the way," Campus Crusade founder and president Bill Bright said. Moved by the dreams, they contact the radio ministry and "freely respond" to the gospel message, he said. In Algeria, an imprisoned

Muslim political radical said Jesus appeared to her in her cell. The woman now is a Christian and works with Campus Crusade ministering to Muslims.

In one African Muslim country, a young man violently tore up a Bible tract and threatened the life of the Every Home For Christ worker going door-to-door with the literature, Dick Eastman of Colorado Springs told NIRR. The next afternoon as the worker sat in his home, he was shocked to see the man knock at his door. "I must have another booklet," the Muslim told him. He explained that the previous night two hands awakened him, and when he turned on the light and asked who was there, a voice said, "You have torn up the truth." The voice instructed him to acquire another booklet, directing him to the EHFC worker's home, the young man said. There, the Muslim read the booklet and became a believer. He has since been expelled from his wealthy family, lives with EHFC's Africa director, and is preparing for ministry to Muslims.

In another incident, several EHFC workers were distributing literature in a marketplace. A man who received a booklet gasped and said he had a vision of the person pictured on the cover in his dream the night before, Eastman said. In the dream, the man was in a deep pit when a rope was thrown to him and two strong hands pulled him up. Upon climbing out, he looked into the face of the man who helped him: Jesus. The workers explained the meaning of the dream and the man was converted on the spot. Later three other people recounted the same dream and two of them became Christians, Eastman said. God is preparing Muslims, and Christian workers follow through, he said.

"Increased prayer on the home front" has had a large impact, Assemblies of God missionary Gordon Barnett said. Supernatural incidents playing a part in conversion have increased over the past 10 years due to more prayer, he said. Barnett, who has lived in the Middle East for 24 years, credited several prayer initiatives like the AD 2000's Praying Through the Window, which calls millions of Christians to pray for several Muslim countries each October; and Youth With A Mission's 30 days of prayer during Ramadan.

Muslims who have such dreams or visions of Christ usually have had a Christian contact and are looking for spiritual answers, said one Assemblies of God missionary who has worked for years in the Middle East and Northern Africa. "It all takes place in context - dreams are one step, a link in the chain" that leads to conversion, he said. God is using people as well as the supernatural to draw people to Him, he said.

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