



How Does God Speak to Us Here and Now? (Part I)

Acts 2:17: (NASB) *And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams.*



It is a pretty simple equation: You love God, you pray to Him, obey Him, serve Him and in return we as humans look for some kind of indication of His love and acceptance. We want and need to hear from God in some way or other. So, how does He speak to us today in the 21st century? Is it through our dreams? Do we have visions? Is it through experiences? How about communicating through other people? Does God speak to us through His ancient word, the Bible? All of the above? Some of the above? Stay with us!

 Introduction, *Remember Your Dreams, Sid Roth, YouTube*

- *We spend a third of our life sleeping. What if that third of your life was actually arranged by God to have you in a total seeing state in your dreams, and He wants to tell you what decisions you should make, yes or no. What direction you should have, wisdom for friends. In your dreams!*

Is that a legitimate way for God to communicate with us here and now?

First, let's see how God has spoken in the distant past:

Genesis 3:8-11: (NASB) ⁸*They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, where are you? ¹⁰He said, I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself. ¹¹And He said, who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?*

This is a simple example of direct communication *without barriers* - the created was in natural communication with the Creator.

Sin enters and the rules change:

Genesis 6:13-14,22: (NASB) ¹³*Then God said to Noah, the end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them...¹⁴Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch...²²Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.*

Here we see direct communication *by selection* - and only with those (Noah) who were striving to do His will.

Visions accompanied the direct communication:

Genesis 15:1-4: (NASB) ¹*After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great. ²Abram said, O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? ³And Abram said, since You have given no offspring to me; one born in my house is my heir. ⁴Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.*



Another layer was created - visions for the seeker. This would be a dramatic experience to make a point. In summary, the voice of God in the Old Testament was reserved for those who were chosen ones seeking His will, like Adam, Noah and Moses. It was not a common occurrence.

 *I heard the voice of God in a dream, YouTube*

- *I heard his voice. Why did he come to me? I have no idea because I am nobody. I am somebody, because I know who I am. I'm God's child, so that's why He came to me. He said, "This is what's to come, Child," and like that in my sleep and I woke up and my eyes were up in my dream and then that's what He showed me.*

Dreams were used:

Genesis 28:12-13: (NASB) ¹²He (Jacob) had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants.

Dreams, especially in the context of the Old Testament, were given to both followers of God and others to specifically reveal God's character, prophecies and power.

God spoke through dreams!

How many biblical Christians did God speak to through dreams?

The Old Testament is full of many dreams given to many people for many reasons - one example:

Genesis 37:5,7-8: (NASB) ⁵Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. ⁶He said to them, Please listen to this dream, which I have had; ⁷for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf. ⁸Then his brothers said to him, Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us? So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

The interpretation of dreams was a widely accepted method of seeing future events.

As a Christian following biblical principles, Old Testament included, we need to follow through the filter of the New Testament including Jesus' words, the Apostles' applications of those words and what they all taught. So, this program will look further at the New Testament as well.

 *Dreams are like parables, Remember Your Dreams, Sid Roth, YouTube*

- *(Sid Roth) I have to tell you, I'm a pretty pragmatic person and therefore I have my dreams, I've had literal dreams, but only a few. I can number them on one hand. However, they're all symbolic, and I never can know exactly what they are so being the type of person I am, I've tossed them all out. Laura, why doesn't God just make it easy and give us literal dreams?*
- *(Laura Harris) You know what? You're right. A lot of times He does, but Jesus spoke in parables and he is still speaking in parables today. But mainly I say the reason He does this is you have to apply your faith. When He shows you something, then it requires you to seek Him. It requires you to pray and to*



come up with an interpretation or go to someone who interprets and then you have to apply your faith to it, and that's pleasing to the Lord.

But is this true now like it was in the Old Testament? Should we pay attention to our dreams because this is how God speaks to us?

Did dreams continue to play a significant role for God's voice in the New Testament? We are going to review every person we know of who had dreams from God in the New Testament.



Who in the New Testament had the most dreams from God?

Joseph:

Matthew 1:18-20: (NASB) *¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. ²⁰But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*

God spoke to a *Jewish man* through an angel in a dream for direction. Joseph would be responsible for raising Jesus as a child.

The three wise men:

Matthew 2:11-12: (NASB) *¹¹After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary his mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.*

God spoke to *foreigners* through a dream for the purpose of protection.

Joseph again!

Matthew 2:13: (NASB) *Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, get up! Take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy him.*

God spoke to a *Jewish man* through an angel in a dream giving him specific instruction and protection.



Give it to you straight, Are My Dreams from God or the Devil, Chris LaSala, YouTube

- Let me just give it to you straight right now. If you have to ask the question, they're from Satan. If you're not a 100 percent certain, if you don't feel peace, love, overwhelming light where you can't really see too good - it's too bright, you've got a dream from the devil on your hands. Now, does this mean God doesn't know what you're dreaming and does it mean you don't have that dream for a specific reason? No.*

This audio clip says determining the source of your dream is based on feelings. We do not believe this to be true, as it is not scripturally correct.



Joseph again!

Matthew 2:19-21: (NASB) ¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, **an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said,** ²⁰Get up, take the Child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead. ²¹So Joseph got up, took the Child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

God spoke to a *Jewish man* through an angel in a dream giving him specific instruction and protection.

Joseph was shown what to do and how to do it in these specific dreams. But he was not a Christian. Still nothing about dreams given to Christians...

How are we told that God will speak to Christians?

Joseph again!

Matthew 2:22-23: (NASB) ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. **Then after being warned by God in a dream,** he left for the regions of Galilee, ²³and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: he shall be called a Nazarene.



God spoke to a *Jewish man* through an angel in a dream to give specific instruction and protection.

Who in the New Testament had the most dreams from God? JOSEPH!

Why Joseph and why so many times?

- This is pre-Christian communication. God was still using a common Old Testament tool for communication.
- Dreams are personal - Joseph would have really paid attention.
- The protection of the Messiah was at stake!



A war over your sleep time, Sid Roth, Remember Your Dreams, Sid Roth, YouTube

- *Because I believe it also can give us sweet sleep. God says in Psalm 127:2 that He gives His beloved sleep, but it's not sometimes so automatic. You say, "Well, I'm not sleeping. I'm His beloved," but you know there is a war going on for that third of our day. The enemy wants us riddled with sleep debt, apneas and insomnia. He wants all of that so we that don't rest, so that we don't have an opportunity to hear from God at that time of day like we can.*

One last New Testament Dream, and yes, it is the only other recorded New Testament dream:

Matthew 27:17-19: (NASB) ¹⁷So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? ¹⁸For he knew that because of envy they had handed him over. ¹⁹While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, have nothing to do with that righteous man; **for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of him.**

Pilate's wife had a dream. Was it from God? We do not know and Pilate obviously did not listen. It still was not a Christian having the dream.

So, are dreams an expected method of communication from God to Christianity? If the New Testament is our template, then no! The *only* New Testament dreams recorded were to Jews and foreigners.



A caller (our regular host, Jonathan) explains how he likes birds of prey and often when he is trying to do something for the Lord in His service and gets nervous, he sees a hawk and it often inspires him. Jonathan is moved by God's creation, more specifically, by the beauty of a hawk.

God does speak to us through the experiences of our lives. We have to find His direction by what happens around us. If you are truly a Christian, you have to believe your life is being directed. So, we have to pay attention to the road signs.

 **Hear God by reading the Bible, *How Can I hear God Speak*, Tim Dobson, YouTube**

- *Five ways in which, from my own personal experience, I won't claim to be an expert, but here's five ways that I think God speaks to me. The God of creation, the God of the universe, here's five ways that He speaks to me and the first is that I read the Bible. It says this in 2 Timothy 3:14: Here's Paul as a mature older Christian talking to Timothy who's a young Christian leader and he says this, "But as for you, continue in what you've learned and have become convinced of because you know those from whom you you've learned it and have from infancy you've known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so the servant of God can be thoroughly equipped for good work."*

What are we given if we are not given dreams? Unequivocally we have the word of God.

Dreams were obviously important in the Old Testament - why are they obsolete in the New Testament for Christians?

The New Testament has the benefit of the written Old Testament:

2 Peter 1:18-20: (KJV) ¹⁸And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. ¹⁹We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: ²⁰Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

...As well as the benefit of the words of Jesus and the Apostles:

2 Peter 3:15-16: (NASB) ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, ¹⁶as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Peter is instructing us that the writings of the Apostle Paul are to be included with (and carry the weight of) the rest of the Scriptures. This is the way God communicates with us today - through the Scriptures. Dreams are not needed.



 **Hear God by reading the Bible, *How Can I Hear God Speak*, Tim Dobson, YouTube**

- *So, how can I hear God speak to me? Well, I suppose the first thing to realize is that God is a God who speaks. God is a God who speaks. God isn't distant, He's not remote, He's not like some kind of God who has wound the world up and let it go on its way and somehow is kind of up there watching what happens. He's a God who interacts with the world.*

Visions in the New Testament

These first two examples were actually visitations by angels and not visions, but they were interpreted as visions:

Luke 1:18-22: (NASB) *¹⁸Zacharias said to the angel, how will I know this for certain? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years. ¹⁹The angel answered and said to him, I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news... ²¹And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²²But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them; and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them, and remained mute.*

Luke 24:22-23: (NASB) *²²But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and did not find his body; they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.*



Observation:

Actual angelic visitations were often looked upon as visions because they were so unusual. The reason for these visits was to inform of great life-changing events.



A caller from Connecticut suggests ***Psalms 25:9: The meek would He guide in judgment; the meek He would teach in His way. Isaiah 30:21: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying turn to the right or to the left.***

Hebrews 1:1,2: *¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.*

God previously spoke through the prophets but today we also have the words of Jesus. We can find clear direction in the Bible with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Other visions: Ananias and Saul

Acts 9:10-13: (NASB) *¹⁰Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, here I am, Lord. ¹¹And the Lord said to him, get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, ¹²and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight. ¹³But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to your saints at Jerusalem.*

Why the visions? This was a really big event! Ananias needed to understand that Saul, the persecutor, was called to Jesus. Saul needed the reassurance that he would be shown the way to be the Twelfth Apostle!



I heard the voice of God in a dream, YouTube

- *I've seen a vision that He gave me, and like I said, it was meteorites hitting the earth. That was the only light coming. There was no sun. The world was in total darkness and that was the only light. It was just meteorites and then the earth started to come up, and it was like a volcano from the whole earth and that message told me that the earth will perish. So, I'm telling you as a sister, and I'm telling you as a friend that God is real, guys, don't let no man or no one deceive you.*

Cornelius and Peter:

Acts 10:3-11: (NASB) ³*About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, Cornelius!* ⁴*And fixing his gaze on him and being much alarmed, he said, what is it, Lord...* ⁹*On the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.* ¹⁰*But he became hungry and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance;* ¹¹*and he saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground,*

Why the visions? This was one of the biggest events in human history - the Gospel would now be open to Gentiles!



Observations:

- Visions were absolutely used in the context of Christianity.
- Visions were a tool to prepare specific individuals for specific and dramatic changes.

Are personal visions a biblical method for God to communicate with us here and now?



A caller from Connecticut suggests that to speak to God she has to pour out her heart in prayer asking for advice. She feels He answers her through signs and within her heart.

Excerpts from Rick's personal testimony: *“When I'm working on preparing for a radio program or a Scripture study, sometimes there are a lot of things I am having a hard time putting together. Many times I get stuck and am not sure how it all fits. I go to sleep at night and the issues begin to work out and the reasoning becomes clear. At times there will be a scriptural answer to a scriptural problem. Upon waking I will test it - does it really fit according to every single Scripture in the Bible. This is undistracted time, like meditating. It really helps me to understand Scripture. I am not saying God is giving me some revelation at night. I am saying that all of the input is there and sometimes I have a hard time sorting through it. That sleep time helps me to understand it more clearly.”*

Peter thought he had a vision but it was an angelic intervention:

Acts 12:6-9: (NASB) ⁶*On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison.* ⁷*And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell...* ⁹*And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.*



 **Angel guarding me, Remember Your Dreams, Sid Roth, YouTube**

- *(Sid Roth) And you told me something last night that I've been thinking about ever since, Laura, and that is you have gotten up at night or opened your eyes and seen someone protecting you right in your bedroom. Tell me about that.*
- *(Laura Harris) Yes, I have seen someone twice at the foot of my bed and once over to my right where just reaching over me to touch me like this, and I had seen angels in the past but it was through bright bursts of light or in other ways over people, around a situation where protection was needed, but this was just a man, and I'm telling you he was there as if you are there right now just guarding over me.*

We presume this was a dream that felt real.

Three more visions given to the Apostle Paul:

Acts 16:8-10: (NASB) ⁸and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. ⁹A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, come over to Macedonia and help us. ¹⁰When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Why was Paul given this vision? Paul needed specific instruction as to where to bring the Gospel. He had to go!

Acts 18:8-11: (NASB) ⁸Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. ⁹And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; ¹⁰for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city. ¹¹And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Why was Paul given this vision? Paul needed specific instruction as to where to continue with the Gospel. He had to stay! Paul was a very unique Christian.

 **Demons brainwashing you, Are My Dreams from God or the Devil, Chris LaSala**

- *A lot of times the demons are mind controlling you and brainwashing you in your dreams and they will set up a whole scenario, and you'll have lucid dreams that are demonic, you'll have astral spirit dreams, visions that are demonic, everything. And I would say 99 out of 100 times, the dream was demonic. Literally 99 out of 100 times.*

Categorizing dreams as either godly or demonic does not make much sense. Should God be using your sleep time to communicate with you? No. That time is used for rest. God made the human body to need rest. Could Satan control our dreams? Possibly, but to have Satan intervening in your life like that would mean you are open to that happening.

Because the vision in **Acts 18:9** was at night, does that mean it was a dream?

Dream: Strongs #3677 onar onar on'-ar; a dream

Vision: Strongs #3705 orama horama hor'-am-ah; something gazed at, i.e. a spectacle (especially supernatural): sight, vision. Translated vision 11, sight 1

Vision: Strongs #3701 optasia; 1. the act of exhibiting one's self to view, 2. A sight, a vision, an appearance presented to one whether asleep or awake



(Root word for) **Vision:** Strongs #3708 oraw hor-ah'-o properly, to stare at AV-see 51, take heed 5, behold 1, perceive 1, 59 1) to see with the eyes 2) to see with the mind, to perceive, know

What is the difference? A dream originates from within one's mind whereas a vision originates from outside. In both cases, God can certainly be the moving force - as can other spirit forces.

2 Corinthians 12:1-2: (NASB) ¹Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to **visions <3701>** and revelations of the Lord. ²I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven.

Why the vision? Paul was given many special gifts to teach, direct and encourage him in order to fulfill the immense work that was put upon his shoulders as the Apostle to the Gentiles. Remember, the Apostle Paul did not walk with Jesus.



Observations:

- Visions were absolutely used in the context of Christianity.
- Visions were a tool to prepare specific individuals for specific and dramatic changes.
- Visions were apostolic tools of specific instruction to aid in the spreading of the Gospel.

We just reviewed visions in the New Testament. Here is a quick review of dreams in the New Testament:

- The *only* New Testament dreams recorded are to Jews and foreigners.
- The New Testament had the benefit of the written Old Testament...
- ...as well as the benefit of the words of Jesus and the Apostles.

The need for dreams is no longer there because we now have the written word.

What about the theme text? It talks about dreams and visions!

Let's look at the context of the theme text:



Acts 2:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. ¹⁵For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; ¹⁶but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷And it shall be in the last days, God says, That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams;

The Apostle Peter - at Pentecost - is quoting the Old Testament prophet, Joel. The Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost - a very dramatic event. Peter explains that what was happening had to do with what the prophet Joel had said. This is a direct Old Testament link to what was happening then.



The way Peter begins describing what Joel said as, *And it shall be in the last days...* But interestingly, that is not exactly what Joel said. Did Peter misquote him?

Here is the context of the original prophecy:

Joel 2:21-24: (KJV) ²¹*Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.* ²²*Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.* ²³*Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.* ²⁴*And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.*

Fear not, O land: Joel was a prophet to Israel. The Scripture is all about Israel in a blessed and fruitful state - but when? That did not happen in Peter's time. (We also know it is about Israel because of the reference to the fig tree, which is a biblical symbol for Israel.)

So, Peter is quoting the prophecy of Joel and applying some part of the prophecy to Peter's time. It cannot be the whole prophecy, because parts of it did not happen then.

Joel continues...

Joel 2:27: (KJV) *...And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.*

Does Israel unequivocally know the Lord is their God right now? No, not yet. Joel describes for us a blessing of the land, His people not being ashamed and they would know the Lord God is their God. He is describing a very specific time frame for this prophecy to unfold in the future. This predicts Israel fully restored - this has not yet happened. Why did the Apostle Peter quote this?

Joel 2:28: (KJV) *And it shall come to pass afterward, (after Israel is blessed, recognizes God and is fully restored) that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*

Israel is finally delivered during the time of trouble:

Matthew 24:21: (NIV) *For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again.*

The Apostle Peter does not quote the part *And it shall come to pass afterward* - he rewords it to say *It shall be in the last days*.

It is in the context of Israel that these visions and dreams happen, not in the context of Christianity. This spirit pouring is to the children of Israel after full restoration - the true *last days* as Peter labeled them! Why then is he quoting this prophecy?

Joel 2:29: (KJV) *And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.*

Peter's rendition in Acts 2:18 reads:

¹⁸*Even on My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit and they shall prophesy.*



We believe the time frame of *in those days* is before the *afterwards*. It is as if the prophecy is written out of order.

Again, Peter's rendition reads:

Acts 2:18: *Even on My bondslaves, (now a different group of people - the true church - the true followers of Christ) both men and women, I will in those days (in the time leading up to the end days) pour forth of My spirit and they shall prophesy.*

The Apostle Peter is saying, "The Spirit has been poured upon us now because we are in the beginning stages of the development of the true church which will eventually bless all the nations of the earth through Israel."

The visions and dreams part of that prophecy is focused on Israel - not on Christian followers. The pouring out of the Spirit and the prophesying was given to the followers of Christ.

Dreams and visions are important in scriptural discussion, but we have to understand where and when they belong.

*So, how does God speak to us here and now?
For Jonathan and Rick (and Kathy) and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



1. A look forward to Part II:

How do we hear the voice of God?

We will examine:

- Study
- Prayer
- Meditation
- The Spirit
- Fellowship

A few Scriptures for the mix:

Job 33:13-17: (NASB) ¹³Why do you complain against Him that He does not give an account of all His doings? ¹⁴Indeed God speaks once, or twice, yet no one notices it. ¹⁵In a dream, a vision of the night, when sound sleep falls on men, while they slumber in their beds, ¹⁶Then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction, ¹⁷That He may turn man aside from his conduct, and keep man from pride;

John 16:13: (NASB) *But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own initiative, but whatever he hears, he will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come.*

Proverbs 30:5: (KJV) *Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*



Romans 10:17: (KJV) *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

1 Thessalonians 2:12-13: (KJV) *That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

2. Let's look at a very famous Old Testament dream given to a pagan king for the purpose of revealing future events.

This dream needed a man of God to interpret it:

Daniel 2:1-6: (NRSV) *¹In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. ²So the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, ³he said to them, I have had such a dream that my spirit is troubled by the desire to understand it. ⁴The Chaldeans said to the king (in Aramaic), O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will reveal the interpretation.*

It has been thought (because of translation) that the King forgot the dreams, but rather it seems to be that he simply did not reveal them, wanting to see the true value of his counselors.

⁵The king answered the Chaldeans, this is a public decree: if you do not tell me both the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. ⁶But if you do tell me the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.

The wise men try reasoning; the king angers and stands firm now accusing them of trying to buy time. The wise men seeing the impossibility of their plight:

Daniel 2:10-11: (NASB) *¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king and said, there is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean. ¹¹Moreover, the thing, which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with mortal flesh. These guys were stuck!*

Next, we see Daniel's bold faith being tested in a new and difficult way.

Daniel 2:12-16: (NRSV) *¹²Because of this the king flew into a violent rage and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. ¹³The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them. ¹⁴Then Daniel responded with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the king's chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵he asked Arioch, the royal official, why is the decree of the king so urgent? Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. ¹⁶So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation.*

Notice, Daniel does not know the dream yet nor does he know if God will reveal it - he does know that God had already given him abilities along these lines...

Daniel 2:17-23: (NRSV) *¹⁷Then Daniel went to his home and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹⁸and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not perish.*

Daniel's first impulse was to go to his brethren for their prayers and support.



¹⁹Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰Daniel said: Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his. ²¹He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. ²²He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him.

Daniel 2:25-30: (NRSV) ²⁵Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king and said to him: I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the interpretation. ²⁶The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation? ²⁷Daniel answered the king, no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, ²⁸but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed were these: ²⁹To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be. ³⁰But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

The interpretation:

Daniel 2:36-45: (NRSV) ³⁶... now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, ³⁸into whose hand he has given... and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. ³⁹After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. ⁴⁰And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these. ⁴¹As you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay... ⁴³As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.

Now the interpretation goes from merely human events to godly events:

⁴⁴And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; ⁴⁵just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.

So, Daniel dramatically reveals the dream, its source and its interpretation, which was more than asked for. He is telling the King: You are being given a look into the future, beginning with your kingdom and ending with the kingdom of God overspreading the earth forever and ever!

Old Testament Dreams really did have high purpose.

3. The complete prophecy of Joel and Peter's Pentecost witness:

Joel 2:21-32: (KJV) ²¹Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. ²²Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. ²³Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. (Consider that this former and latter rain can be a prophetic reference to the first and second Advent of Christ - see Peter's witness below) ²⁴And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. ²⁵And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army



which I sent among you. ²⁶And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. ²⁷And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. ²⁸And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: ²⁹And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. ³⁰And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. ³¹The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. ³²And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Acts 2:14-33: (NASB) ¹⁴But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. ¹⁵For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; ¹⁶but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

Peter goes into this prophecy because of the miraculous event that so many were witnessing:

¹⁷And it shall be in the last days, (Peter identifies the timing - last days, after Israel is restored AND faithful - see Joel above - as he recites the prophecy) God says, That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸Even on My bondslaves (Here is the part that began its fulfillment with Peter and Pentecost) both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My spirit and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹And I will grant wonders in the sky above And signs on the earth below, Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. ²⁰The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood, Before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come. (References to the last days - this time to the time of the return of Jesus) ²¹And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. (The full end result of Jesus' work, both at his first advent as well as at his return.)

Peter then focuses on Jesus and his mission:

²²Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— ²³this man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put him to death. ²⁴But God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵For David says of him, I saw the Lord always in my presence; For He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken. ²⁶Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope; ²⁷Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. ²⁸You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of gladness with your presence. ²⁹Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh suffer decay. ³²This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. ³³Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured forth this which you both see and hear.