

Overview

The Bible indicates that God communicates regularly through dreams. Although our dreams in the night can be difficult to understand, there are basic steps, principles and skills that can serve as a guide to assist us. We can come to understand more and more clearly what our dreams mean and what God is seeking to communicate or reveal. *“For God does speak--now one way, now another - though man may not perceive it. Indeed God speaks once, or twice, yet no one notices it. In a dream, a vision of the night, when sound sleep falls on men, while they slumber in their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction.”* (Job 33:14-16 NASB)

Steps to Dream Interpretation

- A. Record dreams as soon as possible. Dreams are easily forgotten.
- B. Record the date and significant events that occurred prior to the dream.
- C. Give your dreams a title. This will serve as a summary of the dream and often will give significant clues to the meaning of the dream.
- D. Ask God what the dream means and/or what He is communicating.
- E. Ask: What is the central focal point of the dream story?
- F. Ask: Where is the dreamer? Is the dreamer in the dream?
- G. Determine if the dream is intrinsic or extrinsic.
 - Intrinsic – about the dreamer (up to 95% of dreams are about the dreamer)
 - Extrinsic – about others (occur frequently; most often for the purpose of prayer and rarely to be shared with a person or group as a warning or a prophetic word)

Principles of Dream Interpretation

1. Develop and nurture an intimate relationship with God through Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit is Our Teacher and Our Guide, Our Counselor and Our Comforter. We can cultivate a personal relationship with Holy Spirit. Communicate with Him regarding everyday issues and concerns in your life. Ask Him to guide you in your daily decisions, whether big or small. Get to know the voice and guidance of Holy Spirit and become comfortable with listening to and recognizing God’s voice. James 1:5 states *“Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously and without criticizing, and it will be given to him”*. Holy Spirit will use our dreams in the night to communicate with us. He will give us wisdom and understanding regarding what He is communicating when we diligently seek Him.

2. God communicates with us. We can follow a process to receive and respond well to what He is saying.

In general, be attentive and receptive whenever you sense God is speaking. Record your dreams and ask God for the interpretation. Faithfully respond to what you believe God is saying. For example, you may want to talk with God in prayer or in your journal about the issues that are surfacing. Ask Him for guidance on how to proceed. Seek to discern what you are to do and what part God will do.

3. Dreams are often symbolic.

The images including people, animals, objects, numbers, etc. in our dreams normally are symbolic. These symbols are God’s creative way of communicating. They often do not represent what they appear to represent. For example, just because you dream about a person that you know, doesn’t mean that the dream is about that person, God may be using that person symbolically to communicate something to you.

4. God often uses dreams to reveal issues of the heart.

You may want to consider what significant issues you have been dealing with, thinking, or praying about recently. Holy Spirit will often address these issues through your dreams. Our dreams may reveal emotions, longings, opinions, issues of the heart or soul, areas where we need freedom or healing, the status of our relationship with God, ourselves or others.

5. Other Potential Sources of Dreams

We acknowledge that some dreams in the night result from our God given mechanism to resolve the daily stimuli that comes from living. Sometimes the enemy seeks to torment us as well.

Skills

1. Familiarize Yourself with Common Dream Symbols and your personal dream language

There are thousands of dream symbols. You cannot memorize them all, but you can become familiar with some of the more common symbols that come up in dreams. For example, “**House**” typically symbolizes the person whose home it is, in other words if you dream about your house, it is symbolic of you or your life. God customizes His communication in a way that is personal to each of us. We can become familiar with our personal dream language.

2. Consider Various Aspects of the Dream

Dreams are often filled with symbols and can be very complex. It can be helpful to consider various aspects of the dream before attempting to interpret it. Consider the setting - where did the dream take place? Consider the people - Who is in your dream and what is their relationship to you? Activities - what are the individuals in your dream doing? Symbols - objects, colors, numbers, animals, etc... What feelings or emotions did you feel during and after the dream?

3. Determine the Focus of the Dream and Look for the Theme or Story Line

4. Follow Basic Steps of Dream interpretation:

- Draw a diagram with the focus of the dream in the center and significant sub-focuses or symbols radiating off of the focus.
- Ask God what the dream means.
- Seek to understand the meaning of the basic symbols and numbers in the dream.
- Seek to understand who or what the people in the dream represent.
- Look up the meaning of significant names when appropriate.
- Look for plays on words – God is often playful, fun and funny in the ways that He communicates, even when the message is serious.
- Summarize the meaning or the “gist” of what God is saying.
GIST: - The main or essential part of a matter- the essential summary of the meaning.

5. Test the Interpretation: Does it Line up with Scripture? Does it Resonate as Correct?

Once you come up with an interpretation, test it. Does it line up with the Word of God? If the dream instructs you to do something, it should line up with God’s Word. Does the interpretation resonate with your spirit? Ask God to confirm that you are understanding the meaning of the dream correctly.