

Session One: Introduction to Dreams and Visions

Hearing God's Voice

Welcome to this exciting and informative course on how to interpret dreams and visions. You will discover that the realm of dreams of visions is much broader than you may have realized. With this understanding, Scripture will open to you like never before. In today's session, we will explore some of the different ways God speaks to people.

1. We don't always hear what God is saying.

Exodus 4:1-3 *"They will never believe me or listen to me!" Moses protested. "They will say, 'The LORD didn't appear to you.'" Then the LORD asked him, "What's that in your hand?" He answered, "A shepherd's staff." The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground." When Moses threw it on the ground, it became a snake, and he ran away from it.*

The staff is what Moses used when the Red Sea was divided before him in **Exodus 14:16**. What else does Scripture say divides? The Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.*

How does this illustrate the person of Jesus? Just as the dividing staff became a snake, Jesus, the word of God, came to earth and became sin for us.

Exodus 4:6 *And the LORD said furthermore unto him, "Put now your hand into your bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was as leprous as snow."*

Leviticus 14 contains instructions for an offering for leprosy. In this chapter, two doves (representing the heavenly beings of Jesus and the Holy Spirit) are brought as a sacrifice; one of them is placed in an earthen vessel (humanity) and killed and the other is loosed to roam the earth.

Moses then asks the Lord, "What if they don't believe these two signs?"

Exodus 4:9 *And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry land. The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry land.*

Water to blood is a picture of judgement or offering. It represents Christ on the cross

Exodus 4:14 *So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart."*

This is an early picture of tongues and interpretation.

The point being made in these illustrations is that there are layers in the Scripture to which we are not always sensitive. If we learn to hear the voice of God in the realm of dreams and visions, Scripture will open to us in new and exciting ways.

Within the Scripture are encoded deeper truths.

In **Genesis 40**, Joseph interprets dreams for two men. We typically think of these men as being a baker and a butler, but they are in fact a bread maker who is broken and hung on a tree and a wine bearer who is thrown into a pit and resurrected. These two dreams create a single picture of death and resurrection.

2. God can speak outside of Scripture.

Solomon found the wisdom of God in nature.

1 Kings 4:32-33 *He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five. Also he spoke of trees from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that spring out of the wall; he also spoke of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish.*

God can speak however you are prepared listen.

God can speak through the rhema word and through visions.

Romans 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*

The “Word of God” in this Scripture is the Greek word *rhema*, which is the enlightened, spoken word of God. It can also refer to immediate utterances from the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 4:4 *But he answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”*

The Hebrew word for “vision” is חֲזָה, *chazah*. Its most literal meaning is “what comes from breaking through the wall.” The Hebrew letters themselves create an image of two walls with a weapon between them:

חֲזָה

What comes from a vision is **חֲזָקָה**, *chazaq*, which means “strength.” A vision, then, is breaking through a wall or seeing through a veil.

God can speak through numbers and songs.

In the illustration of the woman who heard the number 9637, what did the numbers mean and how did God work through those numbers? A bonding number for proteins. It led to her healing.

Perhaps you wake up with a song on your mind. This can be the Lord speaking to you. Think through the words of the song. Encoded in that song may be a message that God is trying to convey to you.

*We don't just live in this realm,
we live in a spiritual realm
beyond what we can see,
and dreams and visions are insights
into that realm.*

How does receiving a dream, vision, or revelation affect us? It gives us inner strength to look beyond the circumstances that we face.

A dream or vision is a picture that is painting a word from God.

God can speak to us in our sleep

In Scripture, sleep is as death. Take the example of the death of Lazarus.

John 11:11-14 *These things said he: and after that he said unto them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” Then said his disciples, “Lord, if he sleeps, he shall do well.” However Jesus spoke of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”*

Paul also used the metaphor of sleep.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30 *For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

David wrote of it in the Psalms as well.

Psalms 13:3 *Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.*

Just as death is a separation of the body and spirit, sleep allows our spirit to be freed up to move into the other realm.

When we sleep, we have the capacity to move into that spiritual realm where God can speak to us through dreams and visions.

3. A dream as is a word from God.

Joseph received dreams from the Lord, but they took time to be fulfilled.

Psalm 105:19 *Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the LORD tested [purified] him.*

What was the Lord working in Joseph during this period? He was cleansing Joseph of pride.

This idea is confirmed by the prophet Daniel.

Daniel 2:23 *I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of You, for You have made known to us the king's word.*

In Hebrew the word used for “word” is מִלָּה, *milah*, which means dream, matter, word or thing.

Daniel 4:33 *The same hour was the thing [milah] fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.*

In each of these references, a dream from God is considered to be a word from God. It is a *rhema* word from God that gives you faith, strengthens you, and has application for your life.

God speaks to us in whatever way we are willing to listen. Everyday occurrences become supernatural when they are touched by the revelation of God. Broaden your mindset to understand that God can speak to you in a number of ways.

4. Heaven precedes earth.

Dreams and visions are revelations from heaven that God wants to bring from heaven and make tangible on earth.

Matthew 6:9-10 *After this manner therefore pray: Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

Matthew 18:18 *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be what has been bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be what has been loosed in heaven.*

God wants to use you as a vehicle to bring the revelation of heaven into a manifestation on earth.

When Jesus taught, He did not teach without a parable (**Mark 4:34**).

God uses our personal parables to speak His truth in a way we can relate to. When you receive a dream or a vision, start to think of it in terms of Scripture.

- Ask yourself, “Have I seen this before?”
- Is there a Biblical precedent?
- Search for Scriptures relating to the words or images in your dream.
- Dream interpretation resources are available, but should be secondary to the Bible. Remember that interpretation is fluid, not formulaic.

*Once we receive revelation
and understand what God is saying,
we can see heaven manifest on earth.*

Prayer

Father, I believe You still speak to men. I am thankful and humbled that You desire to speak to me. As I step into this journey, Lord, I pray that You would open my spirit to hear what You are wanting to say to me. I pray for an open heart to hear You in new and exciting ways.

In Jesus' name, Amen!

Personal Application

1. Several times in this session, Adrian Beale states that God speaks to us in whatever way we are prepared to listen. In the sessions that follow, we will learn to hear God in new and wonderful ways. At the same time, we are each created with unique receptors with which we relate to God. It is beneficial to be aware

of our unique design so we can use it to tune in to the voice of God. Look through the following list of some of the common ways that people most easily hear God. Think through each one and circle the two or three options that describe you best. If there is a way that you are “prepared to listen” to God that is not listed here, feel free to add it to the list.

- a. *Worship.* Singing, playing an instrument, or being in a worship service helps you feel close God. Perhaps God uses songs to speak to your spirit.
- b. *Intellect.* You hear God best when you study Scripture. Perhaps digging into concordances, apologetics or in-depth sermons help open your ears to God’s voice.
- c. *Supernatural Activity.* Dreams, visions, prophetic words, signs and wonders are some of the best ways you hear God.
- d. *Community.* Being with God’s people energizes and refreshes you. You see God’s activity in their lives and can clearly hear God’s voice through healthy relationships.
- e. *Nature.* God speaks to you when you are in His creation.
- f. *Service.* Through volunteering at church, serving the poor, and “doing” the work of the Gospel, you feel that you are in a place where you can hear the Holy Spirit speak.
- g. *Quietness.* You prefer to seek God in solitude and hear Him in the quiet moments you spend alone with Him.

2. Read **Genesis 37, 40, and 41.**