

The Book of Daniel Part 3
Daniel 1:17 – 2:25

by Erik Olsen

I. DREAMS AND VISIONS IN THE BIBLE:

--divine revelation through dreams is a prominent theme in the book of Daniel so tonight we'll explore what the Bible says about dreams before we delve deeper into the book of Daniel

-- Num 12:4-8: "Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. 6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: **If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.** 7 Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. 8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"

-- instances in the Bible where God spoke directly to people through dreams:

-- Israelites in the Old Testament times...

-- **Jacob:** "Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' ..." (Genesis 31:11)

-- **Solomon:** "At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you? [Solomon asked for wisdom] ... Then Solomon awoke; and indeed it had been a dream." (1 Kings 3:5-15)

-- Gentiles in Old Testament times...

-- **Abimelech:** "But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." (Genesis 20:3)

-- **Laban:** "But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad." (Genesis 31:24)

-- New Testament:

-- **Joseph, father of Jesus:**

--Matt 1:20-25: "...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. ... 24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, 25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS."

-- **the wise men who visited baby Jesus:**

--Matt. 2:12: "Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

-- in other instances people had prophetic dreams but the meaning was unknown until God gave the interpretation through another person or through history

--dreams of **Pharoh** and his butler and baker interpreted by Joseph

--dreams of **Joseph** interpreted by history

--dreams of **Nebuchadnezzar** interpreted by Daniel

-- God spoke to the major prophets and apostles through visions

--most of the time people received visions during prayer; Daniel exemplified this...

-- Daniel 10:12: "Then he [the angel Michael] said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words"

-- Dan 9:20-21: "Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, 21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer..."

--prophets:

--Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and other prophets...

*note: all revelation to Daniel (including interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams) came through visions

--the apostles:

--Peter

--Acts 11:4-5: "But Peter explained it to them in order from the beginning, saying: 5 'I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision..."

--in one instance Peter thought he was seeing a vision but was actually visited by an angel who freed him from prison (Acts 12:5-10)

--other instances

--Paul

--Acts 16:9: "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'" 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

--on the road to Damascus (Acts 22:6) and other instances...

--John

--Revelation 1:1: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,' and, 'What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia

--others:

--Ananias

--Acts 9:10-11: "Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, 'Ananias.' And he said, 'Here I am, Lord.'" 11 So the Lord said to him ..."

--Cornelius

--Acts 10:1-4: "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. 3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, 'Cornelius!' ..."

-- meaning of dreams today?

--there is only one passage of scripture that talks about the activity of dreams in the time after Jesus sent the Holy Spirit dwell inside all Christians (time after Pentecost)

-- Acts 2:14-17: "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, 'Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That 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.

--given the nature of dreams, we should be cautious when trying to make sense of them... fear God rather than dreams:

-- Ecc. 5:7: "For in the multitude of dreams and many words there is also vanity. But fear God." (written by Solomon, one of those whom God spoke to through dreams – 1 Kings 3:5)

-- God warns against "signs and wonders" of false prophets:

-- Deut 13:1-4: "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' — which you have not known — 'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, **for the LORD your God is testing you** to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him."

-- 1 John 4:1-2: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

--many people are deceived into believing psychics just because they have powers (through demonic activity) that are outside the normal realm...

-- future deception of the antichrist:

-- 2 Thess 2:9-12: "The coming of the lawless one is according to **the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders**, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

--2 Cor 11:14: "For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light..."

II. SEEING GOD THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH RATHER THAN DREAMS AND VISIONS

-- most of the visions in the Bible were given to those who wrote books of the Bible at times when the circulation of the books of the Bible was nothing like today... now that we have the Bible we don't have the same need for visions... the Bible contains a picture – from creation to an exhaustive account of Israel's history to four biographies of the life of Jesus to the historical account of the early church to the book of Revelation – a picture that is far more complete than any vision or dream could ever be!

-- **the greatest revelation is Jesus Christ...**

--Hebrews 1:1-2: "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son..."

--Colossians 1:15: "He is the image of the invisible God..."

--John 14:9: Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father..."

--**seeing Jesus through the eyes of faith...**

--Hebrews 12:1-2: "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us [the biblical record...], let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 **fixing our eyes [the eyes of faith] on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of **faith**..."

--Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

--John 20:29: "Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"

Adam Clarke Commentary - From this we learn that to believe in Jesus, on the testimony of his apostles, will put a man into the possession of the very same blessedness which they themselves enjoyed. And so has God constituted the whole economy of grace that a believer, at eighteen hundred years' distance from the time of the resurrection, suffers no loss because he has not seen Christ in the flesh.

--**faith has always been the ultimate goal...**

--Paul speaks of Abraham as an example... Romans 4:20-22: "He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was **strengthened in faith**, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

--Rom 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "**The just shall live by faith.**"