

7 Major Points for Understanding Your Dreams

Where are the Josephs and Daniels for our Day?

An Experience in Germany

When traveling by train from the Frankfurt, Germany region to Rossenheim in southern Bavaria in the middle of the night, I kept hearing the Holy Spirit speak to me over and over, *"Where are the Daniels, the Josephs and the Esthers?"*

As I have pondered deeply on this word for years, I believe the Holy Spirit is searching. Yes, He is on a quest to find believers who dream dreams at any cost, have a discerning spirit to properly interpret the times, and who learn to intercede out of a posture of revelation. Where are the Josephs and Daniels for this generation? Perhaps some of them are those reading this message studying to show yourself approved as a workman for God.

Interpretations Belong to God!

1. **From the Life of Joseph—Gen. 40:8**—*"And they said to him, 'We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter for it.' Then Joseph said to them, 'Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me.'"*
2. **From the Life of Daniel—Dan. 1:17,20**—*"As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in every branch of learning and wisdom. And Daniel had understanding in all kinds of visions and dreams. ... In all matters of wisdom and understanding which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his*

realm."

3. **From the Life of Issachar**—1 Chr. 12:32—*"From the sons of Issachar, those having understanding of times and what Israel should do: two hundred of their captains with all their brothers at their command."*
4. **1 Cor. 12: 7,8**—*"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for the common good. To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit."*
5. **Summation** — What God did before, He wants to do again!

Basic Point For Interpreting Dreams

Revelation Is Full of Symbolism!

As dreams, visions and revelations are full of symbolism, they need to be viewed much the same as parables. Ask the Lord to show you the central issue. When dreams, etc. are broken down into too many details, the meaning becomes increasingly obscure. Frame it out like a giant jigsaw puzzle and the rest of the pieces will fall into place and the picture will be seen.

Dreams are often the language of emotions and therefore contain much symbolism. We must learn to take our interpretations first from Scripture and then from our own life. How God spoke in Genesis will be similar to the symbols and types in the book of Revelation. This holds true in our own lives as well.

Three Realms for Interpretation of Symbols

The first place to look is in Scripture. The Bible is full of parables and allegories from which to draw types, shadows and symbols—examples such as the mustard seed being faith, incense being the prayers of the saints, seed representing the "Word of God," and the candlesticks being the church.

Secondarily, dream symbols are often colloquial

expressions which fill our memory bank. They become turned into pictorial language by the Holy Spirit. God takes the “sayings and idioms” and uses them to speak spiritual truth. An example is Gideon in Judg. 7:9-15, where a barley cake appears. Gideon grew up as a thresher of wheat and barley. The barley cake therefore was a symbol from his colloquial spiritual alphabet with distinct meaning to him.

The third realm of symbols comes from our own personal revelatory alphabet. In this case, the object or symbol does not mean the same to you as it would to others. Every believer has a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit also has a personal relationship with you, and He will speak to you out of symbols from your own very life.

Major Points for Greater Understanding

Reduce the Dream to Its Simplest Form

1. **With Too Much Detail You Will Lose the Interpretation.** Keep it simple—with too much detail you will obscure the meaning. Take the dream to the simplest form and build on that.
2. **Context Determines Interpretation.** The meaning is not always the same. An example: a seed can mean faith, the word, kingdom of God, a future harvest, etc. There are no formulas—1 Cor. 2: the things of the spirit are spiritually discerned, not naturally discerned.
3. **Scenes of Dreams or Repetitious Dreams.** Is it four dreams or is it different aspects of the same issue? More than one dream in the same night is often a different look or version of the same message.
4. **The First Questions to Ask**
 - i. **Are You Observing?** Where are you in the dream? If you are in the observation mode, then the dream is not about you. It is about someone or somewhere else. God does nothing without a witness observing issues.

- ii. **Are You Participating?** Are you participating but still not the main figure? This dream is not about you as the center figure, but includes you.
 - iii. **Are You the Focus?** Is everyone watching you? First, where am I located in the encounter?
- 5. **What are the Objects, Thoughts and Emotions in the Dream?** Are there words in the dream? What impressions and thoughts are you left with when you are awakened or recall the dream? What is the intensity of the dream, the main emotion? You will know intuitively what are more important issues.
- 6. **The Cultural Interpretive Process: West vs. East, North vs. South** There are cultural and social interpretations that must also be brought into our understanding. It depends on the sphere of one's influence as to how much they must consider these things.
- 7. **Meditating on the Laws of God** (Ps. 63:6, 77:12, 119:15, 143:5) We must gain understanding of the principles or metaphors of Scripture—meditate on them day and night. They can have layers of meaning!

Keeping Interpretation Simple

Summary of Things to Remember

1. Most of all, dreams should be interpreted on a personal basis first (John 10:3).
2. Most dreams should not be taken literally. They need interpretation (Dan. 1:17; Gen. 40:8).
3. God will use familiar terms you know (Matt. 4:19).
4. Ponder on the dream or revelation and ask the Holy Spirit for insight (Dan. 7:8; 8:15-16; Luke 2:19; 1 Cor. 2:10-12).
5. Ask the Holy Spirit what the certain thought, word or issue is in the revelation. Reduce the dream to its simplest form. What is the main thought? What object or thought occurs most often? Frame it out like a giant

jigsaw puzzle. Once you get the frame, the rest of it will fit together.

6. Search it out in the Word. Dreams from the Lord will never go against His word (Prov. 25:2).
7. What did you sense and feel from the dream? Was it a good or evil presence, fear, love, concern, hopelessness, disappointment? What was the primary emotion?
8. Relate the dreams to your circumstances and spheres of influence.
9. Consecutive dreams often have the same or similar meaning (Gen. 41:1-7; 25-31). God will speak the same message more than once.
10. Interpretations can be three levels.
 - i. Personal
 - ii. Church
 - Congregation
 - City church
 - Church in a nation
 - Global body of Christ
 - iii. National and international—these can be governmental in nature.
11. More than one interpretation can come forth from one dream. Just as with Scripture, there is the historical context as well as the personal, present implication. So it is with dreams, etc. It might be a general word for the church with specific applications for yourself (or others).
12. Some dreams may only be understood in the future. They unfold over time. Details will make sense down the road.
13. Write down the summary in a journal and date it—where you were, the time if you woke up from it, the main emotions and a possible interpretation.
14. The key to proper interpretation is question, question, question. See Zech. 4 as an example of “how to respond” to a revelatory experience. Humility is marked by being teachable.

Life Is More than Dreams!

“If we idolize that primary mental image and cling to it too tenaciously, we may well despise the realization of the dream when it finally arrives. An overly cherished fantasy has the capacity to steal our joy and even blind us to the dream for which we have longed” –Mark Rutland, *Dreams*, page 38.

Eccl. 5:7 says not to base your life on dreams alone! *“For when there is an abundance of dreams and futilities, then words increase too. Therefore it is God you should fear.”*

Dr. James W. Goll is the president of Encounters Network, director of Prayer Storm and coordinates Encounters Alliance, a coalition of leaders. He is director of God Encounters Training—an e-school of the heart—and is a member of the Harvest International Ministries apostolic team. He has shared Jesus in more than 50 nations worldwide, teaching and imparting the power of intercession, prophetic ministry and life in the Spirit. Goll is the prolific author and co-author of numerous books—including *Shifting Shadows of Supernatural Experiences* (co-authored with Julia Loren), from which this article is adapted—and has also produced multiple study guides and hundreds of audio and video messages.

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