

Having Nightmares? God Might Be Trying to Speak to You

For God speaks once, yes twice, yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, in slumber on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction, that He might turn aside man from his purpose, and conceal pride from man.

He keeps back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword ... Behold, God works all these things, twice, three times with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living (Job 33:14-18, 29-30).

At times, God has repeatedly warned me that something is dangerous, but I've been a little rebellious and didn't believe Him. I think, *I've got this*. I decide that maybe I can actually play with fire and not get burned.

So even though God keeps telling me, "Hey, don't spend too much time getting involved with this person. This path leads where you don't want to go!" Somehow, in my pride and selfishness, I think I know better and that I might be able to handle it just this one time.

In addition to spoken warnings during the day, God also gives me picture warnings at night. Dreams are much harder for me to ignore or deny—especially intense dreams, like nightmares.

Can God speak through them? Sure. He can. God will give me the same message: "Danger, watch out!" But the difference is, I'm living it. I am not just hearing Him say, "Going any farther down this road will lead to trouble and pain." Instead, I'm dreaming it. I am actually going down that road—or in my case, it was a river.

Whitewater Terror

In my dream, I'm being carried quickly down a violent river. I was not in a raft; I was all by myself, and I was being tossed about the whitewater from rapid to rapid. I was totally out of control and could do nothing about it. It was scary and dangerous, and I was terrified. My heart was pounding; my hands were shaking, and I knew it was going to end very badly.

I wake up. God says, "See, told you." I'm clearly distraught, and He calmly explains, "Well, if you would have listened to Me the first 10 times I told you in waking life, I wouldn't have had to scream it in your heart at night." Point taken.

Dreams are pictures that we live. We feel them. We can't tell the difference between something we are dreaming and something that happens in waking life. That is why we sometimes wake up with sweaty palms and racing hearts. For all our bodies know, we really did just live that experience.

Not only are our physical bodies influenced by dreams; our emotions are also fully engaged. God can even fast-forward and let us experience during our night visions the future consequences of the path we're considering taking. He does this as a blessing for us, to help make the message palpable so that we don't miss it and disobey. He wants us to get on His best path and stay on it, following His perfect plans.

Pictures evoke emotion, and emotion moves us to action. Experiencing emotion is an extraordinary benefit of dreams, and we should always be mindful of the feelings we have in them. Dreams exaggerate to get our attention. They will also reoccur if we ignore their messages to us.

Face the Fear

Another reason we may experience nightmares is because they are the cry of an unhealed heart asking us to apply the prayer ministries of inner healing and deliverance to the areas of

need within us. The next example illustrates this and comes from one of our CLU students, Karyn Pearson.

Pre-Ministry Dream: “I had a frightening reoccurring dream for 30 years. The dream was always about me running and hiding from a man. Sometimes it was someone else who was running and trying to hide; however, by the time I woke up, the person running would have morphed into me.”

Setting: “The dream changed after receiving prayer in waking life during a revival meeting at my church. The Lord ministered to me powerfully, and upon leaving the church, I knew I had been delivered from a spirit but didn’t know which one—until my dream that night.”

Post-Ministry Dream: “It started out the same way with someone chasing me; however, this time I turned around to face him and pointed to him, saying, ‘No! I rebuke you in the name of Jesus.’ I have not had that dream since!”

Action: “Running”

Emotion: “Intense fear”

Interpretation: “The dream was revealing the scream of my heart. I grew up in an alcoholic home with lots of fighting and violence. My father would physically beat my mother while he screamed at her. The Lord showed me that when the beatings would start, I would run for cover to escape him. This traumatic time opened a door in my life to the spirit of fear, which was often played out in this nightmare. However, after the Lord delivered me from fear the dreams completely stopped!”

Job Was Right

Praise God for His revelation through our dreams—even the “bad” ones. We want to remember that just because a dream is frightening doesn’t mean it’s not from God. When the Lord

established His covenant with Abram, the Bible says that as deep sleep came upon the patriarch, “terror and a great darkness fell upon him” as well (Gen. 15:12). Likewise, when Jacob awoke from his dream of the heavenly ladder, he, too, was afraid (see Gen. 28:17). Obviously those dream encounters, scary as they may have been, were most certainly from God.

Job was right: While we are asleep in our beds God opens our ears and instructs us through our dreams at night to turn us back from the pit of destruction and to enlighten us with the light of life.

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