

Is This Dream From God?

Nearly 10 years ago, after having been saved and Spirit-filled for 14 years, I experienced a personal revival. Many truths in God's Word became revelation to me, and I learned to live more according to the Spirit than according to the flesh. During this season, I came to understand that God had created me for a unique destiny.

I was SO excited! For the first time in my life, I had purpose—a true sense of calling. As I continued to press into God, He began to speak to me through dreams, visions and prophetic words about the things He would have me do.

He even began to move me in the direction I would need to go to fulfill some of the words. Though they had nothing to do with ruling and reigning, I felt as Joseph must have after he had received supernatural input about his future.

What I didn't know was that, like Joseph, I too was headed for a pit. It was a figurative rather than a literal one—but it was nevertheless a place of betrayal and rejection that caused me much disillusionment and pain.

I couldn't make sense of my experience or find a resolution for it. Slowly but surely the dreams began to fade, and the desire I had to become all God wanted me to be fizzled out.

By His grace, I didn't completely give up at this point; I kept running to Him. And when I pressed in to study His Word, I saw something. I wasn't the only one who had experienced the death of a vision on the way to fulfillment! Many characters in the Bible went through a similar time in their journeys.

Moses was appointed by God to be a leader of His people—to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. He didn't ask for the job; in fact, he resisted it. But once God convinced him of his call, he took the necessary steps to begin walking in it.

What happened? Every time he appealed to Pharaoh to “let God’s people go,” Pharaoh said, “No.” It’s a little difficult to lead a group of people if you can’t get them moving in the right direction! Moses must have wondered whether he had really heard God about the appointment in the first place.

Joseph dreamed that he would rule over his own family; then he was sold by his brothers as a slave. In any society, a slave is a far cry from a ruler! And his chances of fulfilling his destiny got even slimmer when he was thrown in prison for something he didn’t do.

David was anointed as a young boy to be king over the Israelites, but he spent the next 15 years trying to stay alive long enough to make it to the throne. He probably thought Saul, the reigning king, would be the one to train him up and prepare him for the job; instead, Saul sought to kill him.

David must have felt the prophet Samuel had made a big mistake in pouring the anointing oil over his head. The way things were going, he was more likely to become mincemeat at the end of a sword than the next king!

Paul was called as an apostle to the Gentiles. He traveled all over Asia preaching the gospel—until he was apprehended and put in jail. Suddenly, his ministry travels came to a screeching halt. How was he supposed to reach the people God had sent him to?

Perhaps you are in the place today that these godly characters once were, trying to hang on by a thread to a promise or a vision or a prophetic word and wondering why the realization of it seems so impossible—or at least far away. Perhaps you are feeling, as I did, as if you can’t go on.

Don’t worry. You aren’t responsible for putting the wind back in your own sails. “For God is the One working in you, both to will and to do His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). He is

responsible for taking you from the promise to the presentation of it. And He knows that the season in between—the time of preparation—is often difficult.

But He also knows what it will take for you to carry out the commission He has given you, and He wants to be certain you are prepared for the task. He uses the time of preparation to patiently and carefully equip you, going so far as to work all things together for your good so that His purposes ultimately will prevail (Rom. 8:28).

We don't know for certain all that God had to work into—or out of—the biblical characters I mentioned to make them ready for their destinies. But we do know the end results.

Moses led God's people out of Egypt and through the wilderness to the brink of the promised land. Joseph was named second in command to the highest ruler in the nation. David became king over all Israel—not just over one of the two kingdoms. Paul wrote letters while in jail, now called “epistles,” that have “spoken” to Gentiles and believers alike for centuries as a part of the New Testament.

Did these men fulfill their destinies? You bet they did! And you will too. The Bible tells us that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8), so you can rest assured that God will do for you what He did for them.

Don't let the season of preparation discourage you or dampen your faith. Don't let it obscure your vision. Hang on! If you have a promise, you'll see the presentation—just like all the saints who have gone before.