



“How do you know if a dream is from God or just our wild minds?”

I received this question after we finished up our August devotions where we read all the dreams in the Bible.

Dreams pique our interest, because pretty much everyone has them, and a lot of times they are just plain “weird.” It’s natural that we want to make sense of them.

A few observations I had from the Bible readings about dreams:

1. I was surprised at how few dreams are actually recorded in the Bible. I even had to include several visions (things God showed people while they were awake) in order to get enough for 20 devotions.
2. All of the dreams came “out of the blue.” In other words, they were initiated by God wanting to get someone’s attention. They were not prompted by someone searching for answers from God.
3. A good number of the dreams were given to kings - mostly ones who were not even kings of God’s people, (e.g. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar)
4. Most of the dreams seemed to be of a warning nature, sometimes of an immediate threat (like for Joseph or the Wise Men), sometimes a future threat (like Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar).
5. Dreams were typically given at a major turning point in God’s plan for His people - not simply a turning point in the recipient’s life.
6. Both Daniel and Joseph who were able to interpret dreams gave credit to God, saying only He can interpret dreams.
7. People in the Bible who got messages from God in dreams often got more than one dream from Him. It seems He knew which people needed Him to communicate with them in dreams.

So, from what we see in the Bible, we can say that God does communicate through dreams, but does it very rarely. I would say the vast majority of the time we dream about things we encountered or thought during our waking hours.

You may have seen people on YouTube (or elsewhere) claiming to be able to interpret dreams. They usually have “formulas” for their interpretations. For example, they might tell you that trees in dreams always represent “this kind of thing” while clouds in dreams represent “that kind of thing.” Don’t buy it!!! There were no symbols in the biblical dreams that always represented a certain thing.

One thing I have noticed, whether it was in the biblical dreams or people who have had dreams given by God today - they KNEW it was God talking to them through the dream. So, that tells me if we are

wondering if a dream is from God or not - it's probably not! But, since "interpretations belong to God." ask Him to show you. If it truly came from God, He really does want you to know.

Finally, a personal experience: When I dream about people I haven't been thinking about, I will use that as simply a call to pray for that person. I'd encourage you to do that as well.

Thanks for asking,  
Pastor David

Send your questions to [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net)