

Doctrine of Dreams

1. The purpose of dreams was to reveal God's will (Genesis 28:12; 31:24; 37:5-10; 1 Kings 3:5; Matthew 1:20; Matthew 2:13, 19, 20).
2. Even in the present era of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with a fuller revelation (2 Corinthians 5:7) to guide the believer, the promise of dreams is given (Acts 2:17).
3. It is possible for dreams to be corrupted so that the will of a false god is conveyed. One ancient practice was to induce religious dreams by incubation or sleeping in some shrine where the patron god was believed to communicate secrets to the sleeper. Herodotus mentions this practice among the Egyptian sect known as the Hasamonians (Herod IV. p. 172, ed. A.D. Godley). The Lord warned against false dreamers (Jeremiah 23:25, 27; 29:8; Zechariah 10:2) and pointed out that normal desires such as hunger and thirst can produce dreams (Isa. 29:8).
4. God promised to speak to the prophets in dreams (Num. 12:6), but even they had to be tested (Deuteronomy 13:1-5).
5. The absence of dreams was considered to be a form of divine discipline (1 Sam. 28:6, 15).
6. As there is a danger in the absence of dreams there is also a danger in the multitude of dreams (Ecclesiastes 5:7) for it is possible that foolish whims will be insisted upon as requirement of worshippers.
7. Thirteen people in the Bible are credited with specific dreams. Eleven people are noted in the Old Testament while two are listed in the New Testament.

A Dreamer of Dreams

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| • Abimelech | Genesis 20:3,6 |
| • Jacob | Genesis 28:12; 31:10,11 |
| • Laban | Genesis 31:24 |
| • Joseph | Genesis 37:5-10 |
| • Pharaoh's Butler | Genesis 40:5 |
| • Pharaoh's Baker | Genesis 40:5 |
| • Pharaoh | Genesis 41:7-8, 15-22 |
| • A Man from Midian | Judges 7:13 |
| • Solomon | 1 Kings 3:5,15 |
| • Nebuchadnezzar | Daniel 2:3; 4:5-9 |
| • Daniel | Daniel 7:1 |
| • Joseph | Matthew 1:20; 2:12-22 |
| • Pilate's Wife | Matthew 27:19 |