

Do you Dream a lot?

This weeks reading is from Parashat Miketz (*Bereshit / Genesis 41:1-44:17*), Pharaoh has two dreams that deeply disturb him and he seeks a man who can interpret his dreams (*41:1-13*), he calls Joseph and asks him to interpret his dream. Joseph replies saying *“It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.”* Note Joseph says that only God can give an answer of Shalom (שָׁלוֹם, peace) and then Joseph gives Pharaoh the interpretation from the Lord (*41:16-38*). Pharaoh then places all the power of Egypt into Joseph’s hands (*41:39-46*). Seven years of plenty come and Joseph stores away the grain (*41:46-53*) and seven years of famine comes and everyone buys food from him (*41:54-42:6*) including his brothers. Joseph tests his brothers and accuses them of being spies (*42:7-15*) placing them in jail for 3 days. Joseph keeps Simeon and allows the other brothers to return home to bring their brother Benjamin (*42:16-38*). This week’s Parashah ends with the brothers returning to Egypt with Benjamin, they retrieve their brother Simeon, have dinner, and begin making their journey back home (*43:1-34*). Joseph tricks them placing his silver cup in Benjamin’s sack of grain (*44:1-17*). Israel (Jacob) prays to the Lord God of his father’s, Abraham and Isaac. As Israel sends his children back to Egypt he prays for his children saying *43:14 and may God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man, so that he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.* (NASB) calling upon the name of God as “*El Shaddai*” (אֵל שַׁדַּי). Jacob recognized the all sufficiency of God. Today, do we recognize the Lord as *El Shaddai* in our lives like we should be?

<b>כתבי הקודש / The Holy Scriptures</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ספר בראשית פרק לז</b></p> <p>ט וַיְדַבֵּר שָׂר הַמִּשְׁקִים אֶת-פְּרֻעָה לְאמֹר אֶת-הַטָּטְאִי אֲנִי מְזַכֵּיר הַיּוֹם: י פְּרֻעָה קָצַף עַל-עַבְדֵּיךָ וַיִּתֵּן אֹתִי בְּמִשְׁמַר בֵּית שָׂר הַטַּבָּחִים אֹתִי וְאֶת שָׂר הָאֲפִים: יא וַנִּחְלְמָה חִלּוֹם בְּלַיְלָה אֶחָד אֲנִי וְהוּא אִישׁ כָּפַתְרוֹן חִלְמוּ חִלְמוֹנוּ: יב וְשָׂם אֶתְנוּ נֶעַר עֶבְרִי עֹבֵד לְשָׂר הַטַּבָּחִים וְנִסְפָּר-לוֹ וַיִּפְתֹּר-לָנוּ אֶת-חִלְמוֹתֵינוּ אִישׁ כְּחִלְמוֹ פֶּתֵר: יג וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פֶּתֵר-לָנוּ כֵּן הָיָה אֹתִי הַשִּׁיב עַל-כַּנִּי וְאֹתוֹ תָּלָה: יד וַיִּשְׁלַח פְּרֻעָה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֵהוּ מִן-הַבּוֹר וַיַּגְלִחַ וַיַּחֲלֵף שְׂמֹלֹתָיו וַיְבֵא אֶל-פְּרֻעָה: [שני] טו וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרֻעָה אֶל-יוֹסֵף חִלּוֹם חִלְמָתִי וּפְתָר אֵין אֹתוֹ וְאֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי עָלֶיךָ לְאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע חִלּוֹם לְפָתֵר אֹתוֹ:</p>	<p><b><i>Bereshit / Genesis 41:9-16</i></b></p> <p><i>41:9 Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, ‘I would make mention today of my own offenses. 41:10 ‘Pharaoh was furious with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, both me and the chief baker. 41:11 ‘We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. 41:12 ‘Now a Hebrew youth was with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related them to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his own dream. 41:13 ‘And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.’ 41:14 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh. 41:15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.’ (NASB)</i></p>

Reading from Parashat Miketz, the question always arises as to whether God speaks to men today in dreams or visions? Those whom I have spoken to last week at work do not believe God speaks to men today in dreams or visions. Thinking on this topic, there are two groups of people (i) those who believe that God does not speak via dreams and visions and (ii) those who do. The unfortunate thing about dreams and visions is that most cults have gotten their start when their supposed prophets received special visions, visitations or revelations from God, and they were told to form special churches or movements (*i.e. Mormons, Jehovah’s witnesses, etc*). In these examples, each claims God spoke or appeared to them directly and now they have a word from the Lord and men should follow them. Today, with our reading on dreams that come true, this presents us with a problem? How can a person determine that what is being presented is really coming from the Lord? The difficulty is that dreams and visions are very subjective. The question is how can one determine they came from God and how can one interpret the dream? According to *2 Timothy 3:16-17* the Apostle Paul said *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”* This passage speaks clearly that the word of God is sufficient for meeting our needs for instruction from God. One should not look for the Lord to provide dreams to establish doctrine. *Hebrews 4:12* says, *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* Here the Scriptures tell us that the Word of God is the *“discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* As a result of this, the Lord has given us the means to determine if our experiences are from Him or not. We follow Joseph’s example that it is the Lord God Almighty who will interpret a dream or vision. His word sets the criteria or the standard by which to measure ones dream or vision. In *Matthew 7:21-23*, Yeshua said many would come in His name preaching, casting out devils and doing many wonderful works when in fact they were actually workers of iniquity. This reveals to us that everything *“done in the Lord’s name”* does not necessarily mean that what is done has come from Him. Therefore we have to be very careful to observe the fruits that are produced and to study God’s Word for discernment.