



Do you have dreams when you are asleep? I glanced on the internet to see why we dream but there seems to be a number of various reasons. One opinion is that dreams are very healthy for us; another that it is a release of nervous tension. I dream every night but I have not yet decided if it

is because I am extremely healthy or a nervous wreck! My dreams often have people I know or have known but they are in the wrong place or doing silly things. Sometimes my dreams are linked to something that has happened during that day.

One day I had had a parcel containing some printer inks. The firm sends a large box that has lots of empty space with only the pack of inks at the bottom of the box. That night in my dreams I received five of these boxes but did not know what they contained. I had opened four of them and was about to open the fifth when I woke up so never got to find out what was in the box. Several times during the day I found myself wondering what was in that last box. Annoying. Silly!



We can read of quite a number of occasions in the Bible when God spoke to people in a dream, either to show them something important or to tell them of something that was going to happen in the future. Jacob was persuaded by his mother to go away from home because his brother had threatened to kill him. At that time there was the belief that if you left a town or village and went somewhere else, then you left behind your god and transferred your worship to the god of the place in which you then lived. I am sure that most of you have heard of Jacob's dream. He dreamt that there was a ladder/stairway reaching up to Heaven with angels going up and down the ladder. God told Jacob that He would be with him wherever he went. When Jacob woke up he remembered what God had said to him in his dream and he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it." He had the very important realisation that God was not just contained to one town or village, but, that He was everywhere. (Omnipresent) Isn't it good to know that wherever we go and whatever we are doing, God is always with us?



King Solomon also had a dream. He loved the Lord and tried to please Him. In his dream God told him to ask for whatever he wanted and that it would be given to him. Solomon asked for an understanding mind to help him to govern the people. God was so pleased that he had not asked for either riches or a longer life for himself and gave those to Solomon as well as granting his request. That was some

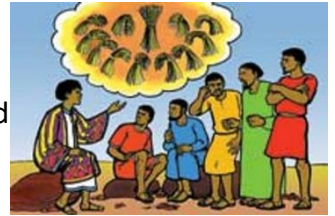
dream wasn't it!

"Please God, give me an understanding mind."

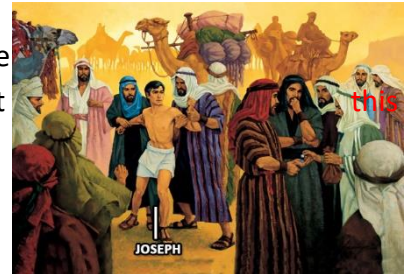
Joseph, who was engaged to Mary, the mother of Jesus, was spoken to by God in a dream. When Mary became pregnant and Joseph knew that it was not his child, he intended quietly breaking off the engagement. He then had a dream and an angel told him to take Mary for his wife because the child had been conceived by the Holy Spirit. He was to call the child 'Jesus' because He would save people from their sins. Now how about that for a dream. What would have been your reaction if God had said that to you? I think I would probably have dismissed it as, 'Just a dream'. We read that Joseph did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. What tremendous faith Joseph must have had to accept



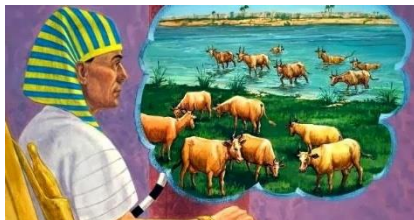
what the angel said, even though he had no idea what it all meant. I would say that he most certainly stepped out of his comfort zone!



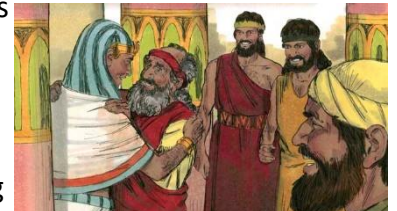
Sometimes God enabled people to interpret dreams. Jacob's son Joseph was used by God in this way. Joseph was one of the younger sons of Jacob and was Jacob's favourite. His brothers were obviously not very pleased about that anyway, but, when Joseph told them that he had had a dream about them bowing down to him, that really put the top hat on things! It is interesting that it says in the Bible, 'His father kept the saying in his mind.' Jacob was able to perceive that this was no ordinary dream that had taken place. The result of the dream was that his brothers sold him to a group of passing travellers. I suppose that at that point Joseph would be wishing that he had kept his dream to himself! Let us bear in mind too, that Joseph himself did not foresee the future that was in store for him.



Joseph ended up in prison for some time, but, because he was able to interpret a dream of Pharaoh, he



was used by God to save many lives. The interpretation of the dream was about how there was going to be seven years of good harvest followed by seven years of famine. Joseph did not take the praise himself for the interpretation of the dream



but told Pharaoh that it was God who had revealed the future events. Bearing in mind that Pharaoh was an Egyptian who would be in the habit of worshipping the various gods of the Egyptians, his reaction to Joseph's interpretation was amazing. He said, "Can we find such a man as this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" and he put Joseph in charge of Egypt to organise the storing of corn in order to cater for the famine that was to come.

The outcome of all that happened to Joseph was that his family went and settled in Egypt. When he met his brothers he told them not to be upset about selling him to the travellers a while back because it was in God's plan so that he would be in a position to save many lives. I think that in one version of the Bible it says, 'You meant it for harm, but God meant it for good.'

Sometimes it does not make sense to us when bad things happen in our lives, but I have found that God often uses those bad times to bring us into a closer relationship with Himself. At the time we do not always see the reason as to why things happen to us, yet a while after we are often able to say, "Yes, God used that to bring about something good." We sometimes forget that we see only a little part of the jigsaw but God sees the whole picture.

Have a good night's sleep and sweet dreams.

P.S. I still sometimes wonder what was in that fifth box!