

Parshat Miketz

Can You Help Me Understand My Dream?



Dear Rebbetzin,

I've heard that you do workshops about dream interpretation and that you also interpret dreams during your private EmunaHealing sessions. I have a reoccurring dream that I am concerned about, so perhaps you can help me. Around 5:30 in the morning, I often wake up upset from the following dream: I see myself stepping into my car and beginning to drive. But there is a very irritating bee that keeps buzzing and distracting my focus from the steering wheel. In my dream, I feel immensely afraid to get stung and then the car keeps moving forward downhill very fast, and I have no way to stop it. I'm overtaken by the fear of having an accident, as the car just keeps going on its own, and no matter how much I try to take control I am completely powerless.

Yakova Shaltiel (name changed)

Dear Yakova,

I'm glad that you are reaching out to me to help you interpret your dream, since it is important to tell the dream to someone who will interpret it favorable for you. The Talmud learns from *Parashat Miketz* that the dream follows its interpretation: "...Rabbi Eleazar said, from where do we know that all dreams follow their interpretations? Because it states, (*Bereishit* 41:13) "It came to pass, as he interpreted for us, so it was." Rabba said, this is only if the interpretation corresponds to the content of the dream, as it states, (ibid. 41:12) "to each man according to his dream did he interpret" (*Babylonian Talmud, Berachot* 55b). Therefore, we can't just make up any interpretation that we like and append it to a dream. The interpretation must correspond to the content of the dream. Yet, the word of G-d contains numerous facets and has several true interpretations. I will do my very best to interpret your dream in a positive way that may also help you work on your inner self.

The Effect of How We Tell Over Our Dreams

Rabbi Chisda said, a dream that is not interpreted is like a letter, which is not read (*Babylonian Talmud Berachot* 55a). Each interpretation magnifies and adorns the Torah. So too in regards to dreams, which are a sixtieth of prophecy. It is encoded in the dream that its actualization takes place according to its interpretations. The interpreters can actualize any of its hidden interpretations (Rav Kook, *Eyin Re'aya*).

The way we tell over our dreams is extremely important, and I notice that you wrote, "I am concerned about my dream" rather than stating, "I had a bad dream." That is excellent, as no one should ever say that he had a bad or negative dream. Rabbeinu Bachaya notes that we should be careful how we tell over our dream since the words we use also have an effect on the interpretation of the dream. For example, the butler started mentioning "בְּחַלּוּמִי/b'chalomi – in my dream" which also means recovering from illness, whereas the baker started by saying, "אֲף/af – even," using the same word as the snake who was punished (*Bereishit* 3:1). Correspondingly, the butler was freed, while the baker was hung.

Dream Interpretation Depends on the Individual Character of the Dreamer

When you tell your dreams to someone who knows you, it can help them to decode your dream, as various images means different things to different people. For example, "One who sees wine in a dream, if he is a Rabbi, then it is good, if not then it means judgment" (*Zohar* 3, 14b). The study of Torah is compared to fine wine. Thus for a Rabbi, whose primary bond in life is with the Torah, seeing wine in a dream is symbolic of Torah. However, the layman must understand wine according to its usual meaning: a means to become intoxicated. As such, it is a sign of judgment- for intoxication leads to improper behavior for which one is judged. So the fact that I do not know you gives me a bit of a handicap. Therefore, please forgive me if you do not feel that my interpretation matches your personality. I do hope that you will accept at the very least part of my interpretation. For the interpretation to come true, it must be accepted by the dreamer as we learn from this week's parasha,

ספר בראשית פרק מא פסוק ח... וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא אֶת כָּל חֲרָטְמֵי מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת כָּל חֲכָמֶיהָ וַיְסַפֵּר פְּרֵעָה לָהֶם אֶת חֲלֹמוֹ וַאֲיִן פּוֹתֵר אוֹתָם לְפָרְעָה:

"He sent and called all the magicians of Egypt and all her wise men: And Pharaoh told them his dream, but there were none that could interpret them to Pharaoh" (*Bereishit* 41:8).

Allow Yourself to Lose Control

Now let's get to your dream itself. You mentioned that you dreamed about bees. Arizal teaches that a leader who is arrogant towards his congregation and those who speak too much reincarnate into bees. Depending on your personality, you will know whether it is superfluous speech or arrogance that you need to work on. However, taken with the second element of your dream, your feeling powerless to stop your car from driving downhill by itself, it seems to me that you are afraid of losing control of your life. Arrogance often goes hand in hand with being too controlling. Therefore, it seems that your dream is a message from heaven to work on humility, which will help you to let go and let G-d.

ספר משלי פרק יט פסוק כא רבות מחשבות בלב איש ועצת השם היא תקום:

"There are many devices in a person's heart, but Hashem's plan shall stand" (*Mishlei* 19:21).

It is easy to fall into the illusion that everything in our lives depends on us, and that if we don't get something done it will remain undone. This kind of attitude causes a lot of pressure, since we feel so indispensable that we cannot afford for one moment to relax and lose ourselves to just having a good time. We need to learn to let go of control and allow things to happen according to Hashem's plan. Hashem is sending you a clear message to allow things to roll a bit while enjoying the ride, for we can never really be in control of the steering wheel of our lives.