

When God speaks it is not simply to warn or to scare us, in fact when God speaks to individuals it is often to the intended benefit of a community or nation. *Does the idea of God speaking to individuals through dreams and visions come as a surprise, despite the many Biblical references to such events?* *Abraham* (Genesis 15:1): God used a vision to restate the Abrahamic Covenant. *Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker* (Genesis 40); *Solomon* (1 Kings 3:5); *Zacharias* (Luke 1:5-23); *Joseph* (Matthew 1:20; 2:13); *Ananias* (Acts 9:10); *Cornelius* (Acts 10:1-6) and *Peter* (Acts 10:9-15); *Paul*: (Acts 16:9-10) (Acts 18:9-11). God also gave him a vision of heaven (2 Corinthians 12:1-6). John (Revelation).

Read Job 33:14-16

Nobody likes to be patronised, talked down to, especially by someone younger than ourselves. This, however, is the situation that Job was being confronted with when Elihu, the youngest of his friends or advisers, begins to speak – Ah the impetuosity of youth. Elihu's one saving grace is that he passionately believes in what he is saying, even if he is wrong, in part. However, what must be most galling for Job is that Elihu is right in some of what he says [see verses 6 & 12 e.g.].

1. v14 Elihu says God speaks now one way and then another. Do you think it is the same today, even though we have the Bible?
2. Elihu is right saying that God speaks but we, often, don't succeed in either hearing or understanding when that happens, how can we learn to listen well?
3. v15 says God speaks in a dream or a vision. What is the difference between the two? See Number 24:4

4. What is our initial response when someone says 'God spoke to me in a dream' or 'I had a vision'? Why do we often become sceptical of other people's experiences but not our own?
5. Why do you think God would choose to speak through a dream or a vision?
6. Even Samuel was uncertain as to whether or not God spoke to him initially [see 1 Samuel 3:1-10, especially verse 1]. If you did believe God was speaking to you in a dream or vision, how should you test it?
7. An absence of visions was due at times to a dearth of prophets (1 Samuel 3:1) and other times due to the disobedience of God's people (1 Samuel 28:6).
8. I rarely recall any dreams. Does that mean God isn't speaking to me? Dreams and visions by their very nature can leave us confused. How do you illuminate that darkness?
9. God can, and does, speak in 'mysterious' ways. He spoke to Samuel as a child, to Moses from a burning bush etc. etc. How would you expect God to speak to you today if not via a dream or vision? Why that method? Would you respond differently if God spoke other than in a dream or vision? Why?
10. Is there anything that may be stopping you from asking God to speak through a vision or a dream? Can you pray and ask?

Prayer Points

Pray for the schools work that Karline participates in, for our partnership in Bexhill Academy and for the opportunities we have to share with the next generation in the town.

Give thanks for BMS partner, the Thailand Karen Baptist Convention and their work promoting and facilitating tree planting and water management in rural Karen communities.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

March 12th 2023

Hearing God:

Hearing God in Dreams and
Visions:
Job 33:14-16

'God spoke to me.' 'The Spirit spoke to my heart.' 'God revealed the idea to me.' Being close to God means communicating with Him, telling Him what is on our hearts in prayer and hearing and understanding what He is saying to us. It is this second half of our conversation with God that is so important but that can also be so difficult. How do we hear his voice? How can we be sure that what we think we hear is not our own subconscious? What role does the Bible play? What does the Bible teach in how the Lord speaks to us? These are some of the areas we will be covering over this next series, as we seek to grow in our relationship with Jesus.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001