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# Torah Dreams

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<b>The Ten Dreams</b> .....	1
<b>The First Dream - Avimelech</b> .....	2
<b>Yosef’s Dreams</b> .....	3
<b>Paro’s Dreams</b> .....	3
Forty-Two By Rabbeinu Bechaye.....	5
<b>A dream is one sixtieth of prophecy</b> .....	5
<b>Rules of Interpretation</b> .....	7
<b>The Truth of A Dream</b> .....	9
<b>The Meaning Follows The Interpretation</b> .....	9
<b>Symbols And Their Meaning</b> .....	10
<b>Torah Cycles</b> .....	16
<b>Hatavat Chalom</b> .....	16
<b>Analysis Of The Ten Dreams</b> .....	17
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	18

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In this [study](#) I would like to study dreams and look at particular dreams to lend insight into other dreams.

One of the most uncanny aspects of dreaming is the feeling that the dream is reality. The most bizarre things can happen in a dream and we relate to them as normal: Fish can talk and complain; we can soar into the sky like a jet, or hover over our bedroom like a helicopter; the bank manager can become a walrus and a walrus can make a good cup of tea. And when we awake, there is that strange pivotal moment of emergence when, hanging between two [worlds](#), we are not sure in which reality we are. Fortunately when we wake up we can say, “Baruch [HaShem!](#)” because we [KNOW](#) it was just a dream.

When we are dreaming, we believe that the world of that dream is real. That is why we can have strong emotions like fear and ecstasy during a dream. Yet, when we awaken we realize that that

world, the dream world was an illusion. How do we “[know](#)” that the dream [world](#) was an illusion? The answer is we just *know*! Thus we learn that our perception of reality is a function of the [daat](#). Further, we learn that there will come a time when we awaken, in the [resurrection](#), from this [world](#), this “dream” world, and realize that this world was *the dream*! When confronted with the reality of the [Olam HaBa](#), we will realize that this fleeting world was just a dream. In the transition from this world to the next, we will suddenly wake up and *know* that this world was a dream. We will suddenly wake up and wipe the sweat off our brow. We will breathe a sigh of relief because we will *know* that the Olam HaBa is the *real* world. This is the [mashal of a dream](#).

A dream is an interesting experience in that an observer knows that we are dreaming when he sees our closed eyes moving rapidly. This stage of [sleep](#) is called REM (rapid eye movement) sleep. If a person is awakened after being in REM sleep for a second or [two](#), he will describe a dream that went on for a long time, sometimes for years! This [teaches](#) us that a moment in the Olam HaBa will be like a long time in this world. A dream teaches us that “[time](#)” in this world is fleeting compared to “time” in the Olam HaBa.

Not all dreams are prophetic, however. Some dreams are simply the mind processing the day’s events. Others are the cold pizza you ate during Letterman or Leno. These dreams are most often nonsensical. They do not stay with you. Yet, there are other dreams that you cannot dismiss no matter how hard you try. These dreams come from the soul.

## The Ten Dreams

There are [ten](#) dreams (dreamed by [seven](#) “dreamers”) in Bereshit (Genesis). What makes this remarkable is that there are no other dreams in the Torah. By Divine Providence, all ten appear in the annual weekly Torah portions read during the

month of [Kislev](#). Lets first examine the [ten](#) dreams:

Torah	Subject
Bereshit 20:3ff	Avimelech and Sarah.
Bereshit 28:12ff	<a href="#">Jacob's</a> ladder.
Bereshit 31:10ff	Jacob's speckled sheep.
Bereshit 31:24ff	Laban told to leave Jacob alone.
Bereshit 37:5ff	<a href="#">Yosef</a> and the sheaves.
Bereshit 37:9ff	Yosef and the <a href="#">sun</a> , <a href="#">moon</a> , and <a href="#">stars</a> .
Bereshit 40:9ff	Yosef and the cupbearer.
Bereshit 40:16ff	Yosef and the baker.
Bereshit 41:1ff	Paro and the cows.
Bereshit 41:5ff	Paro and the sheaves.

The principal Torah figure connected with [dreams](#), both as the 'dreamer' and as the 'dream interpreter', is Yosef, called "the master of dreams"<sup>1</sup> by his brothers. The [four](#) dreams preceding those of Yosef, the dream of Avimelech, Jacob's first and second dreams, and the dream of Lavan, were transparent and did not need special dream interpretation. In these dreams, [HaShem](#), or an [angel](#), appears to the dreamer and directly reveals information. In contrast, the final [six](#) dreams, the [two](#) of Yosef, the two of Pharaoh's ministers, and the two of Pharaoh, require interpretation, having become "encloded" in the imaginative faculty of the dreamer's soul, and appearing in the form of an [allegory](#) and riddle.

There is a chart at the end of this [study](#) which analyzes these ten dreams.

### The First Dream - Avimelech

The first dream is given to Avimelech. In this dream, Avimelech is warned against taking Sarah as his wife. In other words, HaShem is protecting Sarah and [Avraham](#), and by extension He is protecting [Yitzchak](#). Remember that Yitzchak is to be born within the year. This means that his parentage will be questionable if Avimelech spends any quality [time](#) with Sarah. Thus all of the [Jewish](#) people depend on Yitzchak being the son

of [Avraham](#), [HaShem](#) gives a warning to Avimelech in a dream.

The creation of the concept of a 'dream' is found with the first occurrence of the word.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 20:3** But God came to Avimelech in a **dream** by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. 4 But Avimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? 5 Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. 6 And God said unto him in a **dream**, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy [heart](#); for I also withheld thee from [sinning](#) against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. 7 Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall [pray](#) for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.*

It is axiomatic that there are no wasted words in the Torah. Every word is important and carries meaning. [Knowing](#) this, Chazal<sup>2</sup> derive that Avimelech had two dreams. They learn this from the repetition of the Hebrew word Chalom – dream, in the above pasuk. From [our study of the number two](#) we learn that HaShem is establishing the truth of the dream by presenting the issue twice. We will look at several dreams that come in pairs.

Dreamer	First Dream	Second Dream
<a href="#">Avimelech</a>	Dream by night...	In a dream...
<a href="#">Yosef</a>	Sheaves...	Sun, moon, and stars...
<a href="#">In Prison</a>	Cup Bearer...	Baker...
<a href="#">Paro</a>	Sheaves...	Cows...

<sup>1</sup> Bereshit 37:19

<sup>2</sup> Ha'emek Davar "The Depth [of the] Word", a Torah commentary by the Netziv of Volozhin.

The root of the [Hebrew](#) word for dream (chalom - חלום) appears [forty-eight](#) times in Bereshit and another [seven](#) times in the other [four](#) books. These numbers corresponds exactly to the statement in the [Talmud](#) that there were forty-eight prophets and [seven](#) prophetesses who prophesied to Israel.

*Megilah 14a Our Rabbis taught: ‘Forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses prophesied to [Israel](#), and they neither took away from nor added aught to what is written in the Torah save only the reading of the [Megillah](#)’.*

## Yosef’s Dreams

When [Yosef](#) was seventeen years old he had [two](#) dreams. The first [dream](#) he tells his brothers. The second dream he tells his brothers and his father. Note this sequence in the following pasukim:

*Bereshit (Genesis) 37:5-11 And Yosef dreamed a [dream](#), and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. 9 And he [dreamed](#) yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the [sun](#) and the [moon](#) and the [eleven stars](#) made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.*

Note that Yosef’s brothers reacted strongly to his first dream, but, they had no reaction to his second dream. His father, Yaaqov, on the other hand,

reacted strongly to the second dream because he did not know about the previous dream.

In both dreams, [HaShem](#) presents the vivid prophecy that [Yaaqov](#) along with his mother and brothers would bow down to Yosef. His brothers realized that the repetition of the dream attested to its veracity. While they could ascribe the first dream to Yosef’s imagination, however, the repetition of the dream meant that it was not his youthful imagination, but rather it was from [HaShem](#). We see that significant dreams often come in pairs. In fact, Radak says that the repetition of the dream shows that they are prophetic.

In the second dream, Yosef dreams that the moon will bow down to him. It is understood that the sun is Yaaqov and the eleven stars are Yosef’s brothers. This means that the moon represents Rachel, Yosef’s mother. At this time, Rachel is dead. Hence Yaaqov’s concern about this dream. Clearly, this part of the dream can not come true.

The [Gemara](#)<sup>3</sup> derives from this very incident that no dream ever comes true completely; even if part of a dream comes true, there is always some part of it which is meaningless and will not come true. We will explore this concept in greater detail, later in this study.

[Time](#) would reveal the truth of both dreams. In the end we find that Yosef’s brother’s came and bowed down to Yosef because they needed to buy grain. Thus the dream represents the brothers as sheaves of grain.

Interestingly, Chazal derive that we may have to wait up to [twenty-two](#) years for the fulfillment of a dream because that it is how long it took for Yosef’s dreams to find fulfillment. Chazal teach that the twenty-two years differential is possible because the dreams did not take place on the same night.

## Paro’s Dreams

*Bereshit (Genesis) 41:7 “...and Paro awoke and behold – it had been a dream!”*

<sup>3</sup> Berachot 55a-55b

The Torah adds the phrase “*it had been a dream!*” to indicate that the [dream](#) was so vivid that Paro thought he had been witnessing real events.

Paro dreamt [two](#) dreams. One involving sheaves and one involving cows. We will start by examining the dream with the cows in it.

Paro’s first dream needs to be examined carefully in order to understand why [Yosef’s](#) interpretation was accepted, while Paro’s magician’s interpretation was not accepted.

In the Torah we find that words are carefully conserved and that only the words that are needed are recorded. In Paro’s dream, the Torah first tells us what Paro actually dreams. After this, the Torah tells us the dream as Paro relates it to Yosef. This repetition is needed only if there are differences that are important. Since Paro made the changes intentionally, we can understand that he did it in order to test the veracity of the interpretation.

These changes were Paro’s secret, and he used them to see who would correctly interpret the dreams and who would be led astray by these incorrect details. It should be emphasized that Paro apparently understood that this was no regular dream but rather a Divine message, which caused “his spirit to be troubled.” The genuine interpreter of such a dream would certainly [know](#) how to distinguish between the crux of the message and an insignificant detail, between the dream itself and Pharaoh’s personal additions, between what was related and the hidden message.

We, therefore, need to understand the differences between what Paro dreamt and how he related his dream. To facilitate this understanding I have highlighted the essential differences, in red, in the following table.

As Dreamt	As Told to Yosef
Bereshit 41:1 And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.	Bereshit 41:17 And Pharaoh said unto Yosef, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:
2 And, behold, there came up out of the river <a href="#">seven</a> well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow.	18 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow:
3 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the <i>other kine upon the brink of the river.</i>	19 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness:
4 And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine.	20 And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine:
	21 <i>And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning.</i> So I awoke.

When Yosef arrives to solve the riddle of the dream, Paro repeats his description, with the addition (“And their appearance was as bad as it had been at first”), and once again omits the [two](#) sets of cows standing side by side. Yosef begins interpreting the dream and it appears for a moment as though he, too, is going to fall into a trap: “And seven years of famine will follow them, and all the bounty of the land of Egypt will be forgotten, and the [famine](#) will consume the land. And the bounty shall not be known in the land because of that famine afterwards, for it shall be most severe.” Yosef, too, relates to this false detail and his interpretation is incorrect. But a second before Paro signals to his servants to haul the slave back to his prison cell, Yosef continues and, to the astonishment of all present, proposes a reorganization of the Egyptian national economy as a means of dealing with the years of famine!

In fact, this entire suggestion indicates that the [seven](#) years of [famine](#) will not entirely consume the bounty of the previous seven years. Or, in the terminology of the [dream](#), even after the seven years of famine come and consume the seven years of bounty, it will indeed be known that those years of bounty preceded them. The appearance of the “seven lean cows” can indeed be changed: “And the [food](#) shall be for a surety for the land for the seven years of famine which shall come to the land of Egypt, and the land shall not be cut off for famine.” In other words, the years of bounty have the power to save Egypt from the years of famine, in complete contrast to the false detail supplied by Paro.

How did [Yosef](#) gather the audacity to say such a thing? From the dream itself, but from the secret, hidden detail known only to Paro and to Yosef (who admits that it is not he himself who interprets dreams but rather that “God shall put Paro’s mind at rest”). This is the significance of the two sets of cows standing side by side on the banks of the river. There will be a stage, Yosef informs Paro, where it will be possible to place the years of plenty parallel to the years of famine, before the years of famine devour and consume the years of bounty. The food must be [gathered](#) during the years of bounty and kept aside for the years of famine!

Yosef’s audacious suggestion is not a personally-motivated addition to the interpretation of the dream, as it appears at first glance, but rather a direct continuation of the interpretation itself; it is the interpretation of the detail which Paro “forgot” to mention. This suggestion, hinted at in the original dream, invalidates the false detail which Paro added of his own accord, and therefore Paro is left amazed: “And Paro said to his servants, Is there a man such as this, in whom the Divine spirit rests?”

Since Paro’s dreams both took place in the same night, Yosef discerned that the fulfillment would come quickly.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 41:32** And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it*

*is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.*

This is in stark contrast to Yosef’s own dreams which took twenty-two years to be fulfilled.

### **Forty-Two By Rabbeinu Bechaye**

The Torah recounts the dreams of the cows and sheaves [three](#) times: The Torah’s narrative, Paro’s description to Yosef, and Yosef’s interpretation to Paro. Three times [fourteen](#) equals [forty-two](#). Nothing in this dream went unfulfilled. It was all fulfilled in Egypt based on the Prophet’s words, *Egypt will be desolate and unsettled for [forty](#) years (Yechezkel 29)*. The famine began during this time and lasted [two](#) years until [Yaakov](#) came to Egypt. The other [forty](#) years referred to by Yechezkel completed the total of [forty-two](#) years alluded to in the value of [three](#) (recountings of the dream) times [fourteen](#) (number of lean cows and sheaves).

### **A dream is one sixtieth of prophecy**

The [Midrash](#)<sup>4</sup> tells us that prior to the erection of the [Mishkan](#) (the Tabernacle in the wilderness); prophecy existed among all the nations of the [world](#). Once the Mishkan was built, prophecy was, with rare exception, found only among the [Jews](#). The [Talmud](#)<sup>5</sup> relates that from the [time](#) of the destruction of the [Temple](#), prophecy was removed from the domain of prophets but was not removed from the domain of the Sages. The Talmud goes on to say that when prophecy was taken from the prophets it was given to children and fools:

***Baba Bathra 12b** R. Johanan said: Since the [Temple](#) was destroyed, prophecy has been taken from prophets and given to fools and children. How given to fools? — The case of Mar son of R. Ashi will illustrate. He was one day standing in the manor of Mahuza when he heard a certain lunatic exclaim: The man who is to be elected head of the Academy in Matha Mehasia signs his name Tabiumi. He said to himself: Who among the Rabbis signs his name Tabiumi?*

<sup>4</sup> Vayikra Rabbah

<sup>5</sup> Baba Bathra 12a

*I do. This seems to show that my lucky time has come. So he quickly went to Matha Mehasia. When he arrived, he found that the Rabbis had voted to appoint R. Aha of Difti as their head. When they heard of his arrival, they sent a couple of Rabbis to him to consult him. He detained them with him, and they sent another couple of Rabbis. He detained these also, [and so it went on] until the number reached [ten](#). When ten were assembled, he began to discourse and expound the [Oral Law](#) and the Scriptures, [having waited so long] because a public discourse [on them] should not be commenced if the audience is less than ten. R. Aha applied to himself the saying: If a man is in disfavour [with [Heaven](#)] he does not readily come into favour, and if a man is in favour he does not readily fall into disfavour.*

Commenting upon this, the [Zohar](#) states that there are times when prophecy occurs in the mouths of children, they prophecy more than an adult prophet:

***Soncino Zohar, Shemot, Section 2, Page 170a*** in order that while they fight, Israel may have a period of repose.’ And the young boy remarked: ‘This conflict has already begun, and much blood is being shed in the [world](#).’ Said R. Hiya: ‘How does this young boy know this?’ R. Simeon replied: ‘Prophecy at times is lodged in the mouths of children, so that they prophesy even more than the prophets of old.’ And the boy said: ‘Why do you marvel that children have the spirit of prophecy, seeing that this is clearly foreshadowed in the Scriptures? It is written: “And all thy children shall be taught by the Lord.” And, truly, when they are taught by the Lord they prophesy. Of all peoples it is only [Israel](#) of whose children it says that they shall be taught by the Lord, therefore out of them prophecy comes forth.’ Hearing this, R. Simeon came up to the boy and [kissed](#) him, saying: ‘I have never heard this idea till now.’

This is borne out by the fact that at pivotal moments in many Talmudic accounts, a child

would be asked to recite passages he had recently learned. These passages would have prophetic bearing on the situation at hand.

The [Zohar](#)<sup>6</sup>, in a general overview of the subject, explains: “In earlier times prophecy existed among mankind, which was spiritually aware and focused in order to understand the Upper Glory. Once prophecy ceased to exist, mankind employed the heavenly voice (bat kol). Now that both prophecy and heavenly voice have ceased to exist, mankind employs only [dreams](#). The dream is a lower level, being [one-sixtieth of prophecy](#).”

***Soncino Zohar, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 238a***

R. Jose discoursed on the verse: “And on the vine were [three](#) branches, and it was as though it budded and its blossoms shot forth.” ‘How little’, he said, ‘do men care for the glory of their Master or pay heed to the words of the Torah! At first prophecy was vouchsafed to men, and through it they knew the glory of God. When prophecy ceased, they had a bath-kol, [tr.note: t Lit. “daughter of a voice”. According to the Rabbis, on certain occasions during the period of the Second [Temple](#), a voice issued from [heaven](#) to give the [Jewish people](#) guidance or warning; and this was called by them bath-kol.] but now they have nothing but dreams. Dream is a lower grade, being one-sixtieth of prophecy, and it is vouchsafed to everyone, since it comes from the left side. It comes down in various grades, and is shown even to sinners and even to [Gentiles](#). Sometimes the [dream](#) is carried by evil demons who make mock of men and show them false things; and sometimes it is sent to [sinners](#) and tells them things of importance. Now this sinner, Pharaoh’s butler, saw a true dream. The vine represented the [Community of Israel](#), which was called by the psalmist “this vine” (Ps. LXXX, 15). The [three](#) branches have the same reference as the three flocks of sheep which [Jacob](#) saw by the well. (Gen XXIX, 2). Its blossoming typifies the time of Solomon, when the [moon](#) was illumined. The buds represent the lower [Jerusalem](#), or,

<sup>6</sup> Vayechi 238a

according to another explanation, the grade which is over it and gives sustenance to it.

Having said that prophecy ceased to exist in [Talmudic](#) times we can look further down the line to the time of Maimonides (12th century) and see a seeming contradiction to this. Says Maimonides:

“One of the basic foundations of religion is that the Almighty empowers man with the prophetic vision. However, the spirit of prophecy rests only upon the wise man who is distinguished by great wisdom and strong moral character, whose passions never overcome him in anything whatsoever, rather, he is mentally in control over his passions always, and he possesses a broad and sedate mind. When an individual, filled with these characteristics and physically sound, enters the [Spiritual Paradise](#) and is continuously immersed in these great and abstruse themes, having the right mind capable of comprehending and grasping them; making himself holy, withdrawing from the ways of the ordinary masses who walk in the obscurities of the [times](#), constantly energizing himself to train his soul not to have any thought at all of the wasteful endeavors and vanities of the age and its intrigues, but his mind is rather always cleared of the extraneous in order to be focused on higher things as though bound beneath the Celestial Throne in order to comprehend the pure and holy forms of the spiritual beings, gazing and contemplating upon the totality of the wisdom of The Holy One Blessed Be He as displayed by His creatures, from the first form to the very center of the Earth, learning from them His greatness, upon such an individual will the Holy Spirit immediately descend.

And when the Holy Spirit rests upon him his soul will mingle with the exalted angels called Ishim and he will become a different person and he will realize that he is not the same as he was, rather he has been exalted above other wise men, as it is written concerning Saul:

*I Shmuel (Samuel) 10:6 And you shall prophecy with them, and you shall be turned into another man.*<sup>7</sup>

Maimonides further states<sup>8</sup>:

“As you are aware, our Rabbis state that a dream is one sixtieth of prophecy; and you know, that it is inappropriate to make comparisons between [two](#) unrelated concepts or things...and they repeated this idea in [Midrash Bereshit Rabbah](#) and said, ‘the buds of prophecy are dreams.’ This is indeed a wonderful metaphor, for just as a bud is the actual fruit itself that has not yet developed fully; similarly, the power of the imagination at the time of [sleep](#) is exactly that which operates at the time of prophecy, in an incomplete and unperfected state.”

It is clear from Maimonides that man is capable of prophecy today.

I believe that we can resolve this difficulty. What the [Talmud](#) and [Zohar](#) meant by the fact that prophecy ceased was that it was a two-stage cessation from the general masses, but not from worthy individuals. The first stage of the cessation was a cessation of prophecy coming “out of the blue” to members of the general masses. This was accompanied by a relegation of prophecy to children and fools. Then, even this type of prophecy ceased. But, prophecy never ceased from worthy individuals who could attain it (albeit, not easily) in the way described by Maimonides. That type of prophecy, I believe, did exist in the days of the second [Temple](#) with His Majesty King [Yeshua](#) and Yochanan the Baptist, and it could exist among worthy individuals today.

### Rules of Interpretation

Dreams must be interpreted according to rules.

*Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 95a* ‘It is written: “If a [priest’s](#) daughter be married unto a stranger, she may not [eat](#) of an offering of holy things” (Lev. XXII, 12).

<sup>7</sup> Maimonides (Rambam): Yesodei HaTorah, Chapter 7

<sup>8</sup> Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed 2:36

Now this verse is followed by another verse: "But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat, but there shall no stranger eat thereof" (Ibid. 18). These verses are plain enough in the literal sense, but the words of the Torah have also an esoteric significance, and every word therein contains hidden seeds of wisdom, comprehensible only to the wise who are familiar with the ways of the Torah. For, truly, the words of the Torah are not mere dreams. And even dreams have to be interpreted according to certain rules; how much more, then, is it necessary that the words of the Torah, the delight of the Holy King, be explained in accordance with the right way! And "the ways of the Lord are upright" (Hos. IV, 10).

The following is an extract from: *Dream Interpretation From Classical Jewish Sources*, by Rabbi Shelomo Almoli, Translated and Annotated by Yaakov Elman.

Quite clearly, the periods of a person's life are not alike [in spiritual potential]. There are times when one is more prepared for Divine Service than at other times I have found many differences related to whether the dream occurs on the first, second, or third day of the month; indeed, each day of the month is different from the others in this respect. This point was transmitted by R. Hai Gaon and the wise men who followed him, each emending it in his way. However, it is found neither in the Talmud nor in the midrashim, and I do not know its source; perhaps it was transmitted by oral tradition from the Sinaitic revelation, or perhaps it was derived from experience.

However that may be, I have found a hint of this principle in the Torah, in the verse "We dreamed a dream that night, I and he."<sup>9</sup> This verse is difficult: does it make any difference whether the two dreams were dreamed on the same night or over two nights? [That is not the issue; the Chief Cupbearer simply wanted to assure Pharaoh that Joseph, as an outstanding interpreter, had been

able to discern the difference between his dream and the Baker's even though they both occurred on the same night.]

I found another proof for this principle in the word of our Sages in Genesis Rabbah on the verse, "And his father [i.e., Joseph's father, Jacob] kept the matter [of Joseph's dreams] to himself."<sup>10</sup> [Said R. Levi:] When Jacob heard that dream, he took pen in hand and recorded the day and hour and place."<sup>11</sup>

Note that Jacob was careful to note the day of the month on which Joseph dreamed the dream, the day of the week, and the time, for morning dreams are more likely to come to pass. Likewise he recorded the place, for the land of Israel is more open to Divine influence than other lands.

[A Table of Dates]

**Day 1** of the Month: Whatever you dream will turn to joy.

**Day 2-3:** There is no truth in them [any dream on these days].

**Day 4-5:** Whatever you dream will come to pass only after a long time.

**Day 6:** Whatever you dream will come to pass, whether good or evil.

**Day 7:** Whatever you dream will come to pass after a while.

**Day 8-9:** Whatever you dream will come to pass as you dream it.

**Day 10-11:** Whatever you dream will come to pass after a while but without accident.

**Day 12:** Whatever good you dream will soon come to pass.

**Day 13-14:** Whatever you dream will come to pass as you dream it within eighteen days, and therefore offer prayer and supplication before your Creator, for He is forgiving and compassionate, long-suffering, and full of lovingkindness, taking back evil decrees.

**Day 15-16:** Whatever you dream will come to pass after a while.

**Day 17:** Whatever you dream will come to pass in four or five days, and afterwards you will rejoice.

<sup>9</sup> Bereshit (Genesis) 41:11

<sup>10</sup> Bereshit (Genesis) 37:11

<sup>11</sup> Genesis Rabbah 84:12

**Day 18-19:** Whatever you dream will come to pass after a long time, but not everything that you dream.

**Day 20-21:** The [dreams on these days] lie; some say: if they come to pass, there will be rejoicing.

**Day 22:** If you rise, it will come to pass in eight days.

**Day 23:** Whatever you dream will be turned into argument and dispute

**Day 24:** You will go out to peace and rejoicing.

**Day 25-26:** The dream will be fulfilled in eight or ten days, but meanwhile pray to God.

**Day 27-28-29:** It will turn to peace and rejoicing.

**Day 30:** You will be in distress, but ask mercy from God and He will have mercy on you; alternatively: If you dream about any kind of trouble, peace will come thereafter.

I have also often heard that a dream dreamed on the Sabbath will be accurate, since the "extra" soul we are given on that day leaves us more open to Divine influence.

### The Truth of A Dream

All [dreams](#) contain an element of truth and an element of falsehood.

***Berachoth 55b** When Samuel had a bad dream, he used to say, The dreams speak falsely. When he had a good dream, he used to say, Do the dreams speak falsely, seeing that it is written, I [God] do speak with him in a dream? Raba pointed out a contradiction. It is written, 'I do speak with him in a dream', and it is written, 'the dreams speak falsely'. — There is no contradiction; in the one case it is through an angel, in the other through a demon.*

***Soncino Zohar, Vayikra, Section 3, Page 25a** Those who attain no higher than the ordinary soul cling to the side of uncleanness, and when they [sleep](#) unclean sides (spirits) come and cling to them and show them things in dreams, partly true and partly false. Hence heathens also see true things sometimes in their dreams. Now those evil species are of [three](#) grades. The highest are suspended in the air. The lowest mock men in their dreams. The intermediate grade*

*tell men things partly true and partly false, but if true, only relating to the immediate future.*

### The Meaning Follows The Interpretation

***Bereshit (Genesis) 40:9** "Do not interpretations belong to God?"*

The meaning of dreams follow the interpretation.

***Berachoth 55b** R. Bizna b. Zabda said in the name of R. Akiba who had it from R. Panda who had it from R. Nahum, who had it from R. Biryam reporting a certain elder — and who was this? R. Bana'ah: There were twenty-four interpreters of dreams in [Jerusalem](#). Once I dreamt a dream and I went round to all of them and they all gave different interpretations, and all were fulfilled, thus confirming that which is said: All dreams follow the mouth. Is the statement that all dreams follow the mouth Scriptural? Yes, as stated by R. Eleazar. For R. Eleazar said: Whence do we know that all dreams follow the mouth? Because it says, and it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was. Raba said: This is only if the interpretation corresponds to the content of the dream: for it says, to each man according to his dream he did interpret. When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good. How did he know this? R. Eleazar says: This tells us that each of them was shown his own dream and the interpretation of the other one's dream.*

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis LXXXIX:8** AND WE TOLD HIM... AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS HE INTERPRETED TO US, SO IT WAS (XLI, 13). A certain woman went to R. Eliezer and said to him: ' I saw in a dream how that the loft of the upper storey of my house was split open.' 'You will conceive a son,' he told her. She went away and it happened even so. Again she dreamed the same and came and told it to R. Eliezer, who gave her the same interpretation, and it happened even so. She dreamed this a third time and repaired to him but did not find him, so she told his disciples, ' I saw in a*

dream that the loft of the upper storey of my house was split open.’ ‘You will bury your husband,’ they told her, and this did happen. R. Eliezer, hearing a cry of [wailing](#), asked what was amiss, whereupon they related to him what had occurred. ‘You have killed the man,’ he upbraided them; is it not written, AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS HE INTERPRETED TO US, SO IT WAS? R. Johanan said: All [dreams](#) are dependent on the interpretation given to them, save a dream about wine. Sometimes a dream of drinking wine augurs well, and sometimes it betokens misfortune. When a scholar drinks [in a dream], it is a good augury; when an ignoramus drinks, it betokens misfortune.

**Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 183a** the Shekinah also went into [exile](#). It is true that the exile was really the consequence of a divine decree; yet the proximate cause was the coat of many colours which he made for him specially. AND [YOSEF](#) DREAMED A DREAM, ETC . On the subject of dreams, R. Hiya discoursed on the text: And he said: Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord do make myself known unto him in a vision, I do speak with him in a dream (Num. XII, 6). ‘God’, he said, ‘has brought into existence a series of grades, one higher than the other, one drawing sustenance from the other, some on the right, others on the left, all arranged in a perfect hierarchy. Now all the prophets drew their inspiration from one side, from the midst of two certain grades which they beheld in a “dull mirror”, as it says: “I do make myself known unto him in a vision”, the word “vision” denoting, as has been explained, a medium reflecting a variety of colours; and this is the “dull mirror”. The dream, on the other hand, is a sixtieth part of prophecy, and so forms the sixth grade removed from prophecy, which is the grade of Gabriel, the supervisor of dreams. Now a normal dream proceeds from that grade, and hence there is not a dream that has not intermingled with it some spurious matter, so that it is a mixture of truth and falsehood. Hence it is that all [dreams](#) follow their

interpretation, as it is written: “And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was” (Gen. XLI, 13); for since the dream contains both falsehood and truth, the word has power over it, and therefore it is advisable that every dream should be interpreted in a good sense.’

**Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 191b** AND THEY DREAMED A DREAM, BOTH OF THEM, EACH MAN HIS DREAM, IN ONE NIGHT, EACH MAN ACCORDING TO THE INTERPRETATION OF HIS DREAM, ETC . Seeing that we have laid down that dreams follow their interpretation, it may be asked what made Yosef interpret the dream of one in a good sense and of the other in a bad sense. The explanation is that these dreams concerned Yosef himself, and, because he penetrated to the root of the matter, he gave to each dream the fitting interpretation so that everything should fall in its place. AND YOSEF SAID UNTO THEM: Do NOT INTERPRETATIONS BELONG TO GOD? TELL IT ME, I PRAY YOU . Yosef used this formula because it is necessary before interpreting a dream to entrust the interpretation to the Holy One, since there, on high, is the shaping of all events, and His is the interpretation. Observe that the grade of dream is a low grade, the sixth from that of prophecy, and that its interpretation determines its effect, being itself embodied in speech and utterance. This is what is meant by Yosef’s question: “Do not interpretations belong to [God \(Elohim\)](#)?” Assuredly to Elohim.

## Symbols And Their Meaning

Dreams which signify shalom:

**Berachoth 56b** Rab Hanan said: There are [three](#) (kinds of dreams which signify] peace, namely, about a river, a bird, and a pot. ‘A river’ for it is written: Behold I will extend peace to her like a river. ‘A bird’, for it is written: As birds hovering so will the Lord of Hosts protect [Jerusalem](#). ‘A Pot’ for it is written, Lord, thou wilt establish peace for

us. Said R. Hanina: But this has been said of a pot in which there is no meat, [for it says]: They chop them in pieces, as that which is in the pot and as flesh within the cauldron.

From Berachoth 56b:

**A reed:**

Our Rabbis taught: If one sees a reed [kaneh] in a dream, he may hope for wisdom, for it says: Get [keneh] wisdom. If he sees several reeds, he may hope for understanding, since it says: With all thy getting [kinyaneka] get understanding.

**A pumpkin, palm-heart, and a reed:**

R. Zera said: A pumpkin [kara], a palm-heart [kora] wax [kira], and a reed [kanya] are all auspicious in a [dream](#). It has been taught: Pumpkins are shown in a dream only to one who fears heaven with all his might.

**An ox:**

Our Rabbis taught: There are [five](#) sayings in connexion with an ox in a dream. If one [dreams that he] [eats](#) of its flesh, he will become rich; if that an ox has gored him, he will have sons who will contend together in the [study of the Torah](#); if that an ox bit him, sufferings will come upon him; if that it kicked him, he will have to go on a long journey; if that he rode upon one, he will rise to greatness. But it has been taught: If he dreamt that he rode upon one, he will die? — There is no contradiction. In the one case the dream is that he rides on the ox, in the other that the ox rode upon him.

From Berachoth 57a:

**Elephants:**

The elephants are of good omen if saddled, of bad omen if not saddled.

**The name ‘Huna, Hanina, Hananiah, or Yonatan’:**

If one sees the name Huna in a dream, a miracle will be wrought for him. If one sees the name Hanina, Hananiah or Jonathan, miracles will be wrought for him.

**Funeral oration:**

If one dreams of a funeral oration [hesped] mercy will be vouchsafed to him from [heaven](#) and he will be [redeemed](#). This is only if he sees the word in writing. If one [in a dream] answers, ‘May His great [name](#) be blessed’, he may be assured that he has a share in the [future](#) world.

**Reciting the shema:**

If one dreams that he is reciting the Shema’, he is worthy that the Divine presence should rest upon him, only his generation is not deserving enough.

**Laying Tefillin:**

If one dreams he is putting on tefillin, he may look forward to greatness, for it says: And all the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of the Lord is called upon thee, and they shall fear thee; and it has been taught: R. Eliezer the Great says: This refers to the [tefillin](#) of the head. If one dreams he is [praying](#), it is a good [sign](#), for him, provided he does not complete the prayer.

**Intercourse with one’s mother:**

If one dreams that he has [intercourse](#) with his mother, he may expect to obtain understanding, since it says, Yea, thou wilt call understanding ‘mother’.

**Intercourse with a betrothed maiden:**

If one dreams he has intercourse with a betrothed maiden, he may expect to obtain [knowledge](#) of Torah, since it says, Moses commanded us a [law](#) [Torah], an [inheritance](#) of the congregation of [Jacob](#). Read not morashah [inheritance], but me’orasah [[betrothed](#)].

**Intercourse with one’s sister:**

If one dreams he has had intercourse with his sister, he may expect to obtain wisdom, since it says, Say to wisdom, thou art my sister.

**Intercourse with a married woman:**

If one dreams he has intercourse with a married woman, he can be confident that he is destined for the [future world](#), provided, that is, that he does not [know](#) her and did not think of her in the evening.

#### **Wheat:**

R. Hiyya b. Abba said: If one sees wheat in a [dream](#), he will see peace, as it says: He maketh thy borders peace; He giveth thee in plenty the fat of wheat.

#### **Barley:**

If one sees barley in a dream, his iniquities will depart, as it says: Thine iniquity is Palm trees: taken away, and thy sin expiated. R. Zera said: I did not go up from [Babylon](#) to the [Land of Israel](#) until I saw barley in a dream.

#### **Grape vine:**

If one sees in a dream a vine laden with fruit, his wife will not have a miscarriage, since it says, thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine. If one sees a choice vine, he may look forward to seeing the [Messiah](#), since it says, Binding his foal unto the vine and his [ass's](#) colt unto the choice vine.

**Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 144a** 'Again, within this mystery there is another. We have been taught that if one sees grapes in a dream, if they be white, it is a good omen, but if they are black in colour, then, if the dream occur at a time when grapes are in season, they are of good significance, but if not, prayer is needed to avert the omen. Why this difference between white and black, between in season and out of season? Again, it has been said, that one who dreams that he has eaten black grapes can be certain that he will enter the world to come. Why? The clue is to be found in the tradition that the forbidden fruit which was [eaten](#) by [Adam](#) and Eve was the grape, the fruit of the vine, [Tr. note: Cf. Bereshith Rabbah, XV, 8.] for it is written: "their grapes are grapes of gall" (Deut. XXXII, 32)--namely, the black grapes. Thus of the two kinds of grapes, black and white, when seen in a dream, the white signify something

good because they emanate from, and are the product of, the side of life, but the black emanate from the side of death, and therefore one who in a dream sees or eats of such grapes requires special intercession. Again, why do black grapes portend good if dreamt of when in season? As we have already pointed out, when the dream is dreamed at the [time](#) when white grapes are in season naught but good is portended. Why so? Because at that time the whole [world](#) is made fair and joyous when they predominate, and both white and black fit into the scheme of things; but when the white grapes are not in season, and so have no special power, then the dream-appearance of the black grapes is a [sign](#) that the judgement of death hangs over the dreamer, and he needs to plead for mercy because he has beheld the fruit (lit. the tree) which caused [Adam's sin](#), and in consequence of that sin death to himself and to the whole world. Here a problem arises which I would not mention were not the Master here. We have been taught that this world is formed on the pattern of the world above, and that whatever takes place in this earthly realm occurs also in the realm above. But when the serpent caused death to Adam in this world, what could have corresponded to that in the [upper spheres](#)?

#### **Fig tree:**

If one sees a [fig tree](#) in a dream, his learning will be preserved within him, as it says: Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof.

#### **Pomegranates:**

If one sees pomegranates in a dream, if they are little ones, his business will be fruitful like a pomegranate; if big ones, his business will increase like a pomegranate. If they are split open, if he is a scholar, he may hope to learn more Torah, as it says: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate; if he is unlearned, he may hope to perform precepts, as it says: Thy temples are like a pomegranate split open. What is meant by 'Thy temples' [rakotheke]?

— Even the illiterate [rekanim] among thee are full of precepts like a pomegranate.

**Olives:**

If one sees olives in a [dream](#), if they are little ones his business will go on fructifying and increasing like an olive. This is if he sees the fruit; but if he sees the tree he will have many sons, as it says: Thy children like olive plants, round about thy table. Some say that if one sees an olive in his dream he will acquire a good name, as it says, The Lord called thy name a leafy olive-tree, fair and goodly fruit.

**Olive oil:**

If one sees olive oil in a dream, he may hope for the light of the Torah, as it says, That they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light.

**Palm trees:**

If one sees palm-trees in a dream his iniquities will come to an end, as it says, The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion.

**Goat:**

R. Yosef said: If one sees a goat in a dream, he will have a blessed year; if several goats, several blessed years, as it says: And there will be goat's milk enough for thy [food](#).

**Myrtle:**

If one sees myrtle in his dream, he will have good luck with his property, and if he has no property he will [inherit](#) some from elsewhere. 'Ulla said — according to others, it was taught in a Baraitha: this is only if he sees myrtle on its stem.

**Etrog:**

If one sees citron [hadar] in his dream, he is honoured [hadur] in the sight of his Maker, since it says: The fruit of citrons, branches of palm-trees.

**Palm branch:**

If one sees a palm branch in a dream, he is single-hearted in devotion to his Father in [Heaven](#).

**Goose:**

If one sees a goose in a dream, he may hope for wisdom, since it says: Wisdom crieth aloud it, the street; and he who dreams of being with one will become head of an academy. R. Ashi said: I saw one and was with one, and I was elevated to a high position.

**Chicken:**

If one sees a cock in a dream he may expect a male child; if several cocks, several sons; if a hen, a fine garden and rejoicing.

**Eggs:**

If one sees eggs in a dream, his petition remains in suspense; if they are broken his petition will be granted. The same with nuts and cucumbers and all vessels of glass and all breakable things like these.

**Entering a large town:**

If one dreams that he enters a large town, his desire will be fulfilled, as it says, And He led them unto their desired haven.

**Shaving his head:**

If one dreams that he is shaving his [head](#), it is a good [sign](#) for him; if his head and his [beard](#), for him and for all his family.

**Sitting in a boat:**

If one dreams that he is sitting in a small boat, he will acquire a good [name](#); if in a large boat, both he and all his family will acquire one; but this is only if it is on the high sea.

**Easing oneself:**

If one dreams that he is easing himself, it is a good omen for him, as it is said, He that is bent down shall speedily be loosed, but this is only if he did not wipe himself [in his dream].

**Going up to a roof:**

If one dreams that he goes up to a roof, he will attain a high position; if that he goes down, he will be degraded. Abaye and Raba,

however, both say that once he has attained a high position he will remain there.

**Tearing one's garment:**

If one [dreams](#) he is tearing his garments, his evil decree will be rent.

**Standing naked:**

If one dreams that he is standing naked, if in [Babylon](#) he will remain sinless, if in the [Land of Israel](#) he will be bare of pious deeds.

**Arrested by police:**

If one dreams that he has been arrested by the police, protection will be offered him; if that he has been placed in [neck-chains](#), additional protection will be afforded him. This is only [if he dreams] of neck-chains, not a mere rope.

**Walking into a marsh:**

If one dreams that he walks into a marsh, he will become the head of an academy; if into a forest he will become the head of the collegiates.

**Blood-letting:**

A Tanna recited in the presence of R. Nahman b. Isaac: If one dreams that he is undergoing blood-letting, his iniquities are forgiven. But it has been taught: His iniquities are recounted? — What is meant by recounted? Recounted so as to be forgiven.

**A serpent:**

A Tanna recited in the presence of R. Shesheth: If one sees a serpent in a dream, it means that his living is assured; if it bites him it will be doubled; if he kills it he will lose his living. R. Shesheth said to him: [In this case] all the more will his living be doubled! This is not so, however; R. Shesheth [explained thus] because he saw a serpent in his dream and killed it.

**Drinks:**

A Tanna recited in the presence of R. Johanan: All kinds of drinks are a good [sign](#) in a dream except wine; sometimes one may

drink it and it turns out well and sometimes one may drink it and it turns out ill. 'Sometimes one may drink it and it turns out well', as it says: Wine that maketh glad the heart of man'. 'Sometimes one may drink it and it turns out ill', as it says: Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul.' Said R. Johanan unto the Tanna: [Teach](#) that for a scholar it is always good, as it says: Come [eat](#) of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

From Berachoth 57b:

**Kings:**

Our Rabbis taught there are [three](#) kings [who are important for dreams]. If one sees David in a dream, he may hope for piety; if Solomon, he may hope for wisdom; if Ahab, let him fear for punishment.

**Prophets:**

There are [three](#) prophets [of significance for dreams]. If one sees the Book of Kings, he may look forward to greatness; if Ezekiel, he may look forward to wisdom; if Isaiah he may look forward to consolation; if Jeremiah, let him fear for punishment.

**Ketuvim – Writings:**

There are three larger books of the Hagiographa [which are significant for dreams]. If one sees the [Book of Psalms](#), he may hope for piety; if the Book of Proverbs, he may hope for wisdom; if the Book of Job, let him fear for punishment. There are three smaller books of the Hagiographa [significant for dreams]. If one sees the Songs of Songs in a dream, he may hope for piety; if Ecclesiastes, he may hope for wisdom; if Lamentations, let him fear for punishment; and one who sees the [Scroll of Esther](#) will have a miracle wrought for him.

**Sages:**

There are three Sages [significant for dreams]. If one sees Rabbi in a dream, he may hope for wisdom; if Eleazar b. Azariah, he may hope for riches; if R. Ishmael b. Elisha, let him fear for punishment. There

are three disciples [significant for dreams]. If one sees Ben 'Azzai in a dream, he may hope for piety; if Ben Zoma, he may hope for wisdom; if Aher, let him fear for punishment.

### **Beasts:**

All kinds of beasts are a good [sign](#) in a dream, except the elephant, the monkey and the long-tailed ape. But a Master has said: If one sees an elephant in a [dream](#), a miracle will be wrought for him? — There is no contradiction; in the latter case it is saddled, in the former case it is not saddled.

### **Metal implements:**

All kinds of metal implements are a good [sign](#) in a dream, except a hoe, a mattock, and a hatchet; but this is only if they are seen in their hafts.

### **Fruits:**

All kinds of fruit are a good sign in a dream, except unripe dates.

### **Vegetables:**

All kinds of vegetables are a good sign in a dream, except turnip-tops. But did not Rab say: I did not become rich until I dreamt of turnip-tops? — When he saw them, it was on their stems.

### **Colors:**

All kinds of colours are a good sign in a dream, except blue.

**Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 135a** GOLD AND SILVER, AND BRASS, AND BLUE AND PURPLE, AND SCARLET, AND FINE LINEN, AND GOATS' [HAIR](#), AND RAMS' SKINS DYED RED, AND SEALSKINS, AND ACACIA WOOD. Gold symbolizes [New Year's Day](#), the day of "gold", because it is a day of judgement, and the side of judgement, symbolized by gold, dominates it; as it is written, "gold cometh from the north" (Job XXXVII, 22), and "evil will be opened from the north" (Jer. VI, 2). Silver symbolizes the [Day of Atonement](#), when the [sins](#) of Israel are made "white as snow" (Isa. I, 18), for

"on that day shall he make an [atonement](#) for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. XVI, 30). Brass is symbolic of the days of the [Sacrifices](#) of the [Feast of Tabernacles](#), which alluded to the powers and principalities of the heathen nations, who are designated "mountains of brass". "Blue" (techeleth) corresponds to [Passover](#), which established the dominance of the true object of Faith, symbolized by the colour blue, which could predominate only after the punishment of the [firstborn of Egypt](#) was accomplished. So all colours seen in dreams are of good omen, except blue. "Red-purple" (argaman) is connected with [Pentecost](#), symbolizing the giving of the written [Law](#), consisting of [two](#) sides, of the Right and of the Left, as it is written: "From his right hand went a fiery law unto them" (Deut. XXXIII, 2). "Scarlet" (tola'ath shani) is connected with the [fifteenth day of Ab](#), a day on which the daughters of Israel used to walk forth in silken dresses. So far [six](#) symbolic elements have been enumerated; the rest symbolize the [Ten Days of Repentance](#): [Tr. note: From [New Year](#) to the [Day of Atonement](#).] fine linen, goats' hair, rams, skins dyed red, seal (tahash) skins, acacia wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the [incense](#), beryls and set jewels. These are [nine](#), corresponding to nine days of Repentance, and the Day of Atonement completes it and makes [ten](#) days.

### **Birds:**

All kinds of birds are a good sign in a dream, except the owl, the horned owl and the bat.

### **A corpse:**

Our Rabbis taught: [If one dreams of] a corpse in the house, it is a sign of peace in the house; if that he was [eating](#) and drinking in the house, it is a good sign for the house; if that he took articles from the house, it is a bad sign for the house. R. Papa explained it to refer to a shoe or sandal. Anything that the dead person [is seen in the dream] to take away is a good sign except a shoe and a

*sandal; anything that it puts down is a good sign except dust and mustard.*

## Torah Cycles

To understand these [dreams](#) we need to put them into the context of the [Septennial Torah cycle](#). This will anchor these dreams in [time](#).

Torah	1 <sup>st</sup> Triennial Cycle
Bereshit 20:3ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Tevet
Bereshit 28:12ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Iyar
Bereshit 31:10ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Iyar
Bereshit 31:24ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Iyar
Bereshit 37:5ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz
Bereshit 37:9ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz
Bereshit 40:9ff	3 <sup>rd</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz
Bereshit 40:16ff	3 <sup>rd</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz
Bereshit 41:1ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz
Bereshit 41:5ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz

Torah	2 <sup>nd</sup> Triennial Cycle
Bereshit 20:3ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Tammuz
Bereshit 28:12ff	2 <sup>nd</sup> Shabbat of Elul
Bereshit 31:10ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Tishri
Bereshit 31:24ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Tishri
Bereshit 37:5ff	2 <sup>nd</sup> Shabbat of Heshvan
Bereshit 37:9ff	2 <sup>nd</sup> Shabbat of Heshvan
Bereshit 40:9ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Heshvan
Bereshit 40:16ff	4 <sup>th</sup> Shabbat of Heshvan
Bereshit 41:1ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Kislev
Bereshit 41:5ff	1 <sup>st</sup> Shabbat of Kislev

In the [annual Torah cycle](#) almost all of the dreams are read during Kislev.

## Hatavat Chalom

Rabbi Chisda<sup>12</sup> said that the purpose of a bad dream is more effective than lashes in arousing a sinner to mend his ways. The fear aroused by a dream which may foretell an unpleasant [future](#) has a longer lasting impact on the dreamer than the pain suffered in corporal punishment. According to Chazal, our Sages, a bad dream is therefore related to thunder which likewise instills a fear which will hopefully inspire us to return to the Creator.

<sup>12</sup> Berachot 59a

Someone who had a bad dream can recite a special [prayer](#) called “Hatavat Chalom” (amelioration of a dream), which is said in the presence of [three](#) people.

One who has had a disturbing dream should perform the following ritual the next morning together with three good friends. The passages in bold type are recited by the dreamer; then those in italics are recited by the three friends in unison.

*Do not interpretations belong to God? Relate it to me, if you please.’*

**Recite seven times:** *I have seen a good dream. You have seen a good dream. it is good and may it become good. May the Merciful One transform it to the good. May it be decreed upon it [seven](#) times from [heaven](#) that it become good and always be good. it is good and may it become good.*

*The following verses speaks of transformation of distress to relief.*

*You have changed for me my lament Into dancing; You undid my sackcloth and girded me with gladness. Then the maiden shall rejoice in a dance, and lads and elders together; and I shall change their [mourning](#) to joy, and I shall console them and gladden their sorrow. [HaShem](#), your God, did not wish to pay heed to Balaam, and [HaShem](#), your God, transformed for you the curse to blessing for [HaShem](#), your God, loves you.*

The following verses speak of rescue.

*He [redeemed](#) my soul In peace from the battles that were upon me, for the sake of the multitudes who were with me. And the people said to Saul, ‘Shall Jonathan die, who performed this great [salvation](#) for Israel? A sacrilege! -as [HaShem](#) lives, if a hair of his head falls to the ground, for with [HaShem](#) has he acted this day!’ And the people redeemed Jonathan and he did not die. Those redeemed by God will return and arrive at Zion with glad song and eternal gladness on their heads; joy and gladness shall they attain, and sorrow and groan shall flee.’*

The following verses speak of peace.

*I create fruit of the lips: 'Peace, peace, for far and near,' says [HaShem](#), 'and I shall heal him. A spirit clothed Amasai, head of the officers, 'For your sake, [David](#), and to be with you, son of Jesse; peace, peace to you, and peace to him who helps you, for your God has helped you.' David accepted them and appointed them heads of the band. And you shall say: 'So may it be as long as you live; peace for you, peace for your household and peace for all that is with you.'” HaShem will give might to His people, HaShem will bless His people with peace.”*

The following verses are recited three times each:

*HaShem, I heard what you made me hear and I was frightened. HaShem, during [these] years, give him life, HaShem during [these] years, make [known](#): amid rage, remember to be merciful. A song to the ascents. I raise my [eyes](#) to the mountains: whence will come my help? My help Is from HaShem, Maker of [heaven](#) and earth.’ He will not allow your foot to falter; your Guardian will not slumber. Behold, He neither [slumbers](#) nor [sleeps](#) -the Guardian of Israel. HaShem is your Guardian; HaShem is your Shade at your right hand. By day the sun will not harm you, nor the moon by night. HaShem will protect you from every evil; He will guard your soul. HaShem will guard you departure and your arrival, from this [time](#) and [forever](#).’ HaShem spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying: So are you to bless the children of Israel, say to them:’ May HaShem bless you and safeguard you. May HaShem illuminate His countenance for you and be gracious to you. May HaShem turn His countenance to you and establish peace for you. Let them place My Name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.’ May You reveal to me the path of life. The fullness of joys in Your Presence; there is delight at your right hand for eternity.”*

Recite once:

*Go with joy, [eat](#) your bread, and drink your wine with a glad heart, for God has already approved your deeds.’<sup>6</sup> And repentance, [prayer](#), and charity remove the evil of the decree. And peace be upon us and upon all Israel, Amen.*

The [Talmud](#) in Berachot talks of [two](#) actions which might be taken in the case of a disturbing dream. One of these actions is called “hatavat chalom” and the other is called “taanit chalom” or a fast over a bad dream.

The [Gemara](#)<sup>13</sup> indicates that one who has had a bad dream should fast in order to nullify any bad decree against him; he must fast on the day on which he had the dream, even if it is [Shabbat](#). The Rivash<sup>14</sup> writes that one does not have to fast at all for a bad dream if it does not bother him, because it is not a [mitzva](#) to fast; the Rashba too<sup>15</sup> writes that one has permission to fast, even on Shabbat, for a bad dream, but it is not obligatory. The Mishnah Berurah<sup>16</sup> notes that the fasting is of value only if it is accompanied by sincere Teshuvah (repentance).



## Analysis Of The Ten Dreams

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<sup>13</sup> Shabbat 11a

<sup>14</sup> Sheilos V'Teshuvot HaRivash Siman 513

<sup>15</sup> Sheilos V'Teshuvos HaRashba Ibid. Siman 132

<sup>16</sup> Siman 220 Sif Katan 6

Delivered by God or His agent				Related to Mitzrayim					
God comes to Avimelech to warn him about Sarah.	God speaks to Jacob above a ladder.	Angel of God tells Jacob about speckled sheep.	God came to Laban and told him to leave Jacob alone.	Yosef dreams about sheaves.	Yosef dreams about the sun, moon, and stars.	Cupbearer dreams about wine.	Baker dreams about bread.	Paro dreams about cows.	Paro dreams about sheaves.
<b>Bereshit</b> 20:3ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 28:12ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 31:10ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 31:24ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 37:5ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 37:9ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 40:9ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 40:16ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 41:1ff	<b>Bereshit</b> 41:5ff
<b>Earth</b>					<b>Heaven</b>				
<b>The seven which are revealed (Revelation of Power)</b>							<b>The three which are concealed (Justice)</b>		
<b>This was brought on by G-d</b>	<b>A universal G-d</b>			<b>HaShem's Providence</b>			<b>HaShem's Existence</b>		
In the beginning <b>G-d created</b> the heavens and the earth.	<b>G-d said,</b> "Let there be light."	<b>G-d said,</b> "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water."	<b>G-d called</b> the expanse "sky."	And <b>G-d said,</b> "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear."	Then <b>G-d said,</b> "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds."	<b>And G-d</b> said...let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth."	And <b>G-d said,</b> "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky."	<b>G-d blessed them and said,</b> "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth."	Then <b>G-d said,</b> "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness..."
Bereshit 1:1	Bereshit 1:3	Bereshit 1:6	Bereshit 1:8	Bereshit 1:9	Bereshit 1:11	Bereshit 1:15	Bereshit 1:20	Bereshit 1:22	Bereshit 1:26
<b>Death of the firstborn.</b>	<b>Darkness.</b>	<b>Locusts everywhere.</b>	<b>Hail mixed with fire.</b>	<b>Festering boils.</b>	<b>Livestock all dies.</b>	<b>Beasts</b>	<b>Dust becomes gnats.</b>	<b>Frogs</b>	<b>Water is turned into blood.</b>
Shemot 12:29	Shemot 10:22	Shemot 10:13	Shemot 9:23	Shemot 9:10	Shemot 9:6	Shemot 8:24	Shemot 8:17	Shemot 8:5	Shemot 7:20

## Conclusion

In the [Psalm](#) that we recite on [Shabbat](#) and [Holidays](#) before the blessings after the meal, there is the following phrase, "When [HaShem](#) returns our captivity, we will be like (awakening) dreamers...."

*Tehilim (Psalms) 126:1 A Song of degrees.  
When HaShem turned again the captivity of*

*Zion, we were like dreamers. 2 Then was our mouth filled with [laughter](#), and our [tongue](#) with singing: then said they among the heathen, [HaShem](#) hath done great things for them. 3 [HaShem](#) hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. 4 Turn again our captivity, [HaShem](#), as the streams in the south. 5 They that sow in [tears](#) shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and [weepeth](#), bearing precious [seed](#), shall doubtless come*

*again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves  
with him.*

When [HaShem](#) finally brings us out of the long night of [exile](#), we will rub our eyes like people emerging from a darkened cinema, and we will then realize that we were only dreaming these [six](#) thousand of years.



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