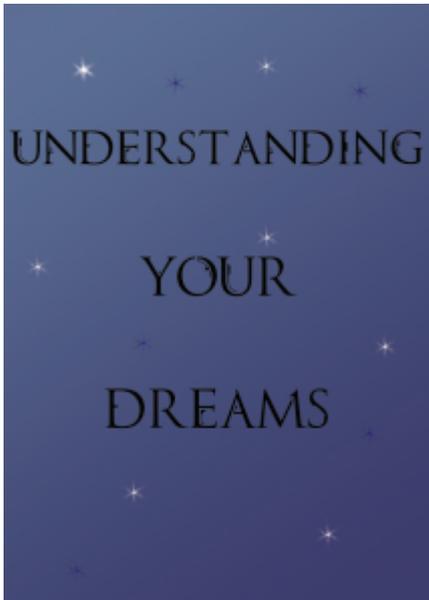


Practical Dream Interpretation Pt 2: Don't get emotional

So this one woke me up sobbing.



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I had been recruited and commanded to run some sort of a gauntlet – it was a strange situation and hard to describe. It wasn't the normal sort of gauntlet where punishment is being meted out, but instead more of a gladiatorial situation. I was informed that an unseen enemy was running "our people" through this trial and I had been chosen by "our side" to do this even though I had no experience. A more experienced woman was going with me – I was given the easier weapon to use and she had the weapon that actually needed the skill and experience. The rules of the gauntlet were simple, we were to pass between two rows of people who were armed with knives, and who were not permitted to approach us unless we came within a certain proximity of them. The people along the way were a strange mix – people in garbage bags who were intermixed with people in wheelchairs. So, the strategy (if I had been thinking in those terms) would be to only engage the people we actually had to

engage (the people who attacked us), clearing them out slowly (and by clearing them out I mean killing them). The gap down the middle of the two rows was very wide.

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When the start was signaled, I rushed forward in my fear and inexperience. I left too many enemies for my more experienced partner and even though she fought valiantly, she died. I didn't die, I made my way through and by the end of the first round, people were marveling at my skill on the battlefield. Everyone was impressed. But I was devastated. I had been thrown into a battle that I did not really want to fight, assuming that it was important and that there was no choice, and I had killed my own ally, someone who was more skilled and experienced than I was. And the people that I killed with my own weapon – I felt the knife go in every single time as though it happened in real life. Why didn't I ask her what I should do? Why didn't I let her go first? Why didn't I lean on her experience instead of acting as though I was in the fight alone. And why was I placed into a fight without any training whatsoever and expected to survive? Who were these people I killed?

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This was a difficult dream to come to terms with because my emotions were running so high afterwards. I had to calm down and get a grip. One of the biggest mistakes people make in dream interpretation is trying to interpret while they are still upset. Some dreams from God are incredibly upsetting, but so are normal run of the mill nightmares. If we have allowed ourselves to fall prey to our emotions, we might mistake a simple nightmare for a warning from God and this can spell disaster for ourselves and others. So the first thing I did was to sit on this dream until I could think straight and sometimes that can take quite a while. Be patient – I have never had an upsetting warning dream happen the night before I

needed to act on it. If a warning puts you into a state of panic, leaving you unable to act wisely in response to a threat, then it wasn't a very effective warning. I had a dream three years ago while on my way to a vacation that made it very clear that if we kept driving there would be terrible consequences (an explosion). I was very unhappy, but was able to calmly go to my husband with the warning and we turned around – only to find out when we got home that our blown tire on the popup camper had ruptured the propane line and if we had tried to light the grill in the RV park at our destination, we could have killed ourselves and potentially a lot of other people. The dream was a bad one, but was delivered in such a way that I was able to calmly make a rational decision. The point of the warning was to get me to turn around, not to confuse me – the dream was meant to be clear so that I could act immediately on the warning.

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In this case, I simply said to myself, “Okay, I am too emotional right now to really look at this so I will write it all down and pray and come back to it in a bit. Until then, I am not going to allow myself to be dragged into any fights against my will. No matter how much someone “needs me.”” Really, until I stopped crying and feeling like a murderer, I was in no condition to really think straight anyway.

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It took about a day to start being able to process through everything I saw, even though I got my emotions completely under control after a couple of hours. At this point, I could look at the dream without emotion and without judgment – this is one of the really good reasons why it is important to cultivate the fruit of self-control. Self-control isn't just about how we conduct ourselves at the pot luck or about how we treat people; self-control is also about not allowing our emotions to have dominion over us. If we are running high (or

low) on emotions, we will almost always mistake our feelings for the leading of the Holy Spirit and we will not be able to tell the difference – no matter how mature we tell ourselves we are. My initial gut reactions about this dream were not the best and I missed a lot of the really important questions.

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Was the person I was fighting alongside really my ally? Was it really my fault that she died? Was she recruited or was she there because she wanted to be there? And who were these people who recruited me? Why did I assume they were the good guys? Why did I assume that the people on the sidelines would attack me – after all, until I rushed out towards them no one budged. Why did I assume that everyone had to be killed? What was this about, really? And who was in charge? Why were my “enemies” curled up in the fetal position and wrapped in garbage bags, while others were in wheelchairs? Why didn’t any of them even get a blow in against me, and why don’t I remember even seeing any weapons, but only suspected or assumed their presence? And how did my ally die without my seeing it happen?

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When I was new to “online religion” on facebook, I allowed myself to be recruited into fights by people who seemed like my allies. They loved being on walls that more resembled gladiatorial arenas than assemblies of faith. I would charge forward and start some trouble with people I didn’t even know. I would see them as garbage and hopelessly crippled by their “ignorance,” instead of looking at them as the “babes” in Messiah that they were, obscured by a bunch of “garbage,” or as people who had problems with their “walk.” The things I said – I brought much shame to my King and Master in the eyes of the world through my contempt for people who didn’t see things my way. I didn’t care how far in I drove the knife, or if I wounded them badly enough to cripple them more than I

already thought they were. They weren't people to me, even though they were my brothers and sisters in belief (separated only by denominational dogma), and I assumed they were my enemy so I preemptively jumped into the fray and drew first blood. No time to reason, no time to make sure who was who and what was what. I got recruited into it by people who either enjoyed it or invited it and got themselves in over their head. I was obsessed with winning back then and so I went, even though I hated conflict. I wasn't contending for the faith; once my blood began boiling I was a conqueror bent on destruction. I am no longer ashamed of the things I did before I was saved, because when I look at that it is like I am looking at someone else's life who is dead now. I look at her and weep because she was so lost and without hope. I am deeply repentant, but no longer ashamed. But it's the things I have done as a believer that bring me to feel shame because I am aware that there are people out there who I can never reach with an apology who carry the memory of my pointless cruelty. If I had the guts to actually look my victims in the face I might, at one time, have been an effective Inquisitor. But now, looking back at the gauntlet and focusing on the people waiting along the sidelines, I see that my initial sin wasn't the murders, my initial sin was my failure to question the situation in the first place.

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So the interpretation of the dream involved symbolism, puns and experience:

1. Recruitment into a battle by people I assumed were fighting a needed battle on behalf of God, but the people who they were fighting against were not worthy opponents and it was in no way a fair fight. I was inexperienced because I was still very immature.

2. Men wrapped in garbage bags in the fetal position = babes in faith obscured by garbage. Men in wheelchairs = those in

Messiah who still do not know how to walk according to God's laws.

3. The weapon I was given – a chainsaw. Not a sword, but a man-made device with a bunch of tiny blades designed to rip, not to divide between bone and marrow. My ally's weapon, a cross between a bludgeon and a knife, good for beating people over the head with something.

4. I killed 19 people. I am assuming that is 19 people I drove away from the faith, or at least away from the laws of God. And people were so impressed with that.

5. I assumed that the people standing along the sidelines were the aggressors, but the truth is that we were the villains. Just because we are right doesn't mean we are right.

6. What purpose did the emotion serve in my dream? It wasn't there for no reason. The emotion showed me how entirely wrong we can be about a situation when we are not fully in control of ourselves.

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So now that the dream was broken down, when asked to join a fight I had to ask things like, "Why are you even on that thread involved with this?" "Why do you have these divisive, argumentative people on your friend list anyway?" "What do you hope to accomplish when everyone simply desires to win and no one wants to weigh the evidence?" "Why are you recruiting me into this situation, honestly; is it to persuade people of the truth or to be proven right?" "I see you have already recruited others to the thread, why do you need me?" "If you need to recruit people, why not admit that you have decided to get involved with something that you cannot handle yourself and delete the thing? If this was of God, then He would have given you the words to fight His battle or He would recruit people personally."

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But the biggest thing I had to do once the dream was broken down was to repent, because like Paul, I am a murderer. Paul just held the coats and approved while others threw the stones. I was throwing the stones, and evidently 19 of them hit the mark. Like Paul, I have to spend the rest of my life trying to get those lives back.

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The gauntlet is a place for barbarism, it is not a place for love or teaching. No one who comes to a gauntlet is there in order to truly represent Messiah, because He cannot be represented in such a place. Tell me, if you know, when was Yeshua (Jesus) ever part of a gauntlet? On the day He died, when the group of elders and chief priests beat Him and abused Him. There is no honor to be had for our Master when a bunch of believers gang up on someone, seeing them as trash instead of as babes, or ignoring the fact that they are badly disabled by their walk. That's the problem with online religious debates and why I see them largely as evil. I despise any debate when I cannot face my opponent, when I cannot know anything about them and I am encouraged not to give a damn. If I don't care about the humanity of the person I am talking to, then I will not talk to them and I certainly will not argue with them. If I don't love them, then how can I correct them? Nor am I inclined to get into any conversation with someone who does not value me as a human being. It is the antithesis of Kingdom life to place no value in the life of another, to boil them down to mere opponents.



A classic military gauntlet where people endure pain and punishment and cannot strike back.