
Is There a God? Signs, Signs, Everywhere a Sign

The dream about greed was mundane when compared with what I was actually seeking. I wanted to find the source of our being, to look upon the face of God, not that this term can do justice to what created us. Like many Jews, I can find no name for what created us, for I regard it more as a metaphysical essence that we are one with than a distinct entity per se. Nonetheless, there comes a time wherein observing, learning and thought will draw us toward our source.

I've pursued many paths to find God, but few of them were taken during the seeing state. Moreover, some of the resultant experiences were terrifying, and the flashes I see of them in my everyday life are disturbing. It is one thing to experience a basic morality dream, but quite another to seek the ultimate font of our existence. My first attempt to find God during an astral/seeing dream happened nearly thirty years ago, after I had graduated from college and was working as a weight training coach at UNH. Yet, labeling these experiences as first or second is dubious because there's something about them that goes beyond time.

One night, I was in that special dream state wherein only consciousness resides, an experience that came upon me without warning or intention. There was no light or images, just a feeling of great power and conscious clarity within. I could hear the now-familiar high-pitched hum, and as it increased in intensity, there came the usual sensation of growing acceleration. However, the acceleration/power feedback loop soon exceeded anything previously experienced, and by a wide margin. I sensed infinite energy was at my disposal, and the power increased exponentially while I sped through the encompassing void.

It struck me that this was an ideal opportunity to seek the answer to a question that had haunted me for so many years: "Is there a God?" I realized the seeing state would not last, and thus sought a strategy that could arrive at some meaningful answers. Having mastered temporal manipulations in prior seeing states, I decided to delve back toward the beginning of all things, for we are all children of Event One. The course was set to follow a similar track as was taken during the *Need versus Greed* dream, and I was soon plunging back through time. With this thought came the realization that a coherent setting might provide an answer. Yes, I was in total control of the dream state, or at least it began that way. So, I willed a scene with people, and in a split-second it came to be.

Oh, it seems I've materialized in a living room. It's well-kept and adorned with lots of worn furniture. My goodness, it feels like I've dropped into a real setting, an event that was

probably recorded in an official report or diary. The details are stunning. There's a delicately embroidered doily draped over the back of an old hump-back couch. Each stitch is vivid, as are the patterns on the worn carpet beneath my feet. Based on these furnishings, the timeframe must be about 1930, although I'm not sure. Huh, I can still hear the humming noise. How odd. I wonder whether this setting's continuity can be maintained? Come on, stay focused.

Ah, an old man is seated on that upholstered chair! He must have noticed me at the same instant I detected him, and the poor fellow looks shocked. Perhaps I dropped into his living room from somewhere out of time and space. Yeah, that would scare anyone. Oh, this guy's been around the block. His face is grizzled and wrinkled, with poorly shaven stubble. He must be about sixty-five or so, gaunt and worn. I sense a lifetime of hard toil, and he sure reflects the part. A loose-fitting shirt covers his boney shoulders and oversized, green workpants are held up by a pair of old-fashioned suspenders. I'd better be quick and direct. It's uncertain how long I can stay in this setting.

"I'm in a dream state, and I don't have much time to speak with you."

Nuts, he looks upset. Let's calm him down.

"Relax. You won't be harmed in any way, but I've a question to ask."

Oh, a young lady with long, dark hair has rushed in. She stands in the doorway that serves the rooms, looking at me. She's shocked, frightened. I think she's the old man's daughter. Her flour-covered apron indicates she is cooking. Damn, the woman is as distressed by my presence as her dad, and there she goes—beating a hasty retreat.

It's strange. I can sense her thoughts. Yeah, she's calling the police, telling them an intruder has invaded her family's house. But I also discern flashes of the futility she feels about living at home and caring for her ailing father. She is desperate and lonely, fearful of an empty future. It's as if we're one. Stop it! Stay focused on finding an answer and don't be delayed.

"All I want to know is if there's a God."

Nah, he's too terrified to speak. He's cringing, pushing himself into the shabby chair's padding. There's no time for this nonsense. This guy is going to answer me! I'll grab the codger by his suspenders and shirt and lift him up. That's it. Now pull him close. He's like a feather in my hands, but I shouldn't treat him too roughly.

"IS THERE A GOD?"

Gosh, I'm screaming. The poor guy is petrified, trembling in my hands. Man, didn't you learn anything from the violence dream? My desperation can easily become his if I don't act with restraint! Oh, he's far too frightened to supply any answers. This is pointless. Let's put him back on the chair and search elsewhere. Be careful, though. This guy has been through enough.

Now close your eyes and concentrate. I'll travel into another past setting for an answer, no matter the cost. That's it. Concentrate on the background humming sound. Yes, it's getting louder and an intensifying power is streaming through me. Oh, I'm getting a bit intoxicated, so it's best to stay focused. Whew, it's like being buzzed, but my control is still there. And I'm going to find an answer to the most important question that's ever been asked. Nothing will get in the way. But it's imperative to seek people who might have a clue, though that's a matter of chance. Perhaps not. Religious people might provide better answers, but their minds are usually filled with more dogma than reason. Well, it's worth a try.

Let's stop here. Come on, concentrate on a setting. That's it. Yeah, I'm materializing. A hard surface appears beneath my feet. Now open your eyes. Hmmm, I'm in the middle of a large New England meeting room, a very impressive place with a high ceiling and lots of ornate woodwork. Wow, this room is in good order. There are several well-varnished wooden pews and benches here, and a large walnut pulpit. Perhaps this is a church or town hall. Ah, two men are standing close by, sort of a Mutt & Jeff duo. They're dressed in Puritan garb, rimmed black felt hats, cape-like overcoats, neck ruffs, sleeve cuffs, baggy breeches, and knee stockings. Yeah, the time is probably about 1650 or so. I must have startled these guys, because they look stunned. Let's try to calm the situation. Speak softly.

"Please don't get upset. I'm not here to harm anyone. All I want is the answer to a simple question."

Damn it! My words didn't allay their fears. The taller man fled, and this other guy is also about to bolt. No way! I'll grab his black overcoat. That's it. Now pull him in close—real close.

"Is there a God?"

Gosh, I was almost growling when I said that. He quivers and tears roll down his face. All I sense in him is terror, absolute fear that I'm a demon. Oh, this isn't going to work! Let the poor man go! And now he crumples to the floor. He glances up at me, shielding his face with an arm. What a look of horror in his eyes. Damn it! It's foolish to force answers from those who do not know. But what do I do? These dreams are rare, and this mission is failing.

This background humming is increasing in volume and pitch, making it difficult to stay focused. Nuts, the Puritan is scrambling for the door. I bet this event will be recorded in a local paper or church chronicle as a demonic incursion, something I can research. It doesn't matter though. Those who read about this experience will dig out the truth. Now close your eyes and direct your thoughts. I have to find another setting and time, and to go back much further. The source is in the distant past, and I've barely gone back 400 years. Man, can this be done?

Come on, concentrate of the feedback loop! Let the velocity become energy, and ignore the damn counter-pressure! It'll take a lot of energy to get anywhere meaningful in the past. But this transition is r-rough going! Damn, now there's a sudden surge of acceleration and power, and here comes the pain. I have to get through this, this pain. I have to find a still point—a place to materialize. But I can't open my eyes or find a setting. Come on, you can do this. What the heck—still nothing! That transition took it out of me. I have to try harder! Yes, now I can see, but that was difficult. These dreams are tearing something out of me.

Wow, I'm in an outdoor clearing by a rocky shoreline. The air smells of the sea and it's warm here. A man stands in front of me, short and stocky, with dark skin and curly black hair. He's wearing a knee-length white tunic, and he appears to be Greek. He must be from the fourth or fifth century B.C.E., or perhaps a bit earlier. Ah, I'm in his mind. He's a fisherman, but not dressed for the task on this occasion. I think he's going to the local market, but...

Shoot! He's terrified by my sudden appearance and is about to run. No way, my friend! I'll grab his tunic, but don't be hostile or aggressive. He's gaping at me, so I'll smile. Now he's relaxing. Yes, he's different from the others, much more in control of his base emotions. Ah, he returns my smile. I'll let go of the tunic, and dip my head. And he dips his head in return. Good first step in communication. Here is a rational man, a person of reason, so let's speak with him in a calm and rational way.

"Is there a God?"

He looks perplexed. Let's try again, only more slowly.

"Is there a God?"

Now he's saying something, but I cannot understand a word of it. He must be speaking in old Greek or another ancient language. Bits and pieces of the meaning come through, but not enough to understand what's being said.

This is infuriating! At last someone gives me an answer, but it's in a foreign tongue that I can't fully comprehend. Maybe I can see inside his mind, and—

Now he discerns my frustration. He's backing off, and there he goes, running down the beach like a frightened rabbit.

Damn it! This isn't working. What the hell am I going to do? Look, there is still great power within. These short jumps into the past just aren't working, and they're wasting time and energy for no gain. It's clear that thoughts can go back in time, at least in the metaphysical sense. But can I generate enough power to get to the very beginning? I've never tried anything like that. It's like taking my consciousness on the ultimate journey, but achieving the needed speed and energy will be painful. It might also be dangerous. Yet to get to the source, I must be willing to risk everything. It's do or die. So be it!

Now close your eyes and fixate on the humming. Ah, here comes the feeling of increasing velocity, but this time I'll slowly allow the sound and speed to reach their ultimate levels. It may be the duration of the acceleration phase that determines the length of the trek. It's worth a try, so let's head for the source. There's increasing acceleration and power, but don't allow the loop to get out of control! That's it. Now, put the peddle down just a bit. Oops, the volume and pitch are growing at a frightening pace. Come on! Work on controlling this! Yeah, now we're cooking! There's a great feedback loop going, and power is pulsating through me. This time I have to keep it up, though. Oh, the sound is becoming a piercing scream, but keep going. That's it! You can do this! The sense of speed and energy is almost uncontrollable. Keep your focus! The pressure tears. It's a-a-agonizing!

The noise and acceleration are unbearable, but I must go on. There is...an odd weakness, yet I have to stay focused. That's it, concentrate on velocity and ignore the rest. Oh, man, the speed is becoming astronomical! Tremendous power surging. It eff'n hurts! God, something is being ripped away! I'm bleeding energy, but the acceleration is still increasing. It'll be okay if we just keep...Ow! The pain rips into me. Noise...pressure...My head aches; it pounds. Nausea and dizziness. Come on! Go on! Go on! You must go on! I have to penetrate this damn pressure. Do or die! Damn you! More speed! GO ON!

What the...? S-s-suddenly there's a...there's a feeling of...serenity, absolute tranquility. The sound, pressure, and motion are gone. The barrier gave way, but I'm so damn weak. It's impossible to move, yet I must continue. I'm on my knees, too weak to stand. My throat is parched. It's difficult to concentrate, and I...I can't open my eyes. What has happened to me?

I must force my eyes open, g-get my senses attuned. I can do this. I must! But it's so damn hard. You have to try! You have to. That's it. There we go. Oh, my. Unbelievable! There's a field of thousands of dazzling, colored lights flashing all around me and a tinkling sound like...like glass wind chimes. This is a place of calmness and beauty. It is transcendent. Oh, but it's so damn hard to keep my eyes open. Is this how I will die? What is that in front of me? I must lift my head.

Within the middle a vast field of waltzing lights stands a tiny woman. There is no ground nor sky nor sense of depth. It's as if all dimensions have melded together, except for those

that give presence to the woman. I have to concentrate. She is dressed in a white, pleated robe, and around her waist is a golden belt. In her right hand she holds a bundle of short, golden rods tied together by a cord. The name Rebecca comes to mind. How do I know that? She isn't talking, but I can sense the name. W-w-we are becoming as one, merging. Could this be Rebecca Stone, a childhood friend? It might be!

It's an effort to hold my head upright, let alone communicate. Must try to speak. I can't! I—I'm too damn weak. No, I cannot fail now. Please, please, please! Let the words flow.

"Is...there...a...God?"

My words are hoarse and distorted. I've failed! No, no, she might understand. Yes, I know she understands. She smiles. Now there's a sense of penetrating empathy, warm, compassionate, inviting. It covers me, soothing the pain. It's the stuff of love—pure unconditional love. A piercing, resonating thought enters my mind.

Yes, there is a God.

No, I feel doubt. Rebecca might be a part of me, an old memory. Or perhaps she comes from without. Maybe outside and inside are not distinct in this realm of thought. There must be some proof of what she says, a sign. Yes, I must ask for a sign, something tangible. But it's impossible to speak. Force an utterance, a relevant thought.

"Sssiii..."

Oh, nuts! What I just said doesn't sound anything like "sign." My head is starting to droop again. Come on, hold your head upright. The sight! What a marvelous vision! Rebecca's face zooms into view while the distance between us shrinks. I can sense her love and power.

She holds up the bundle of rods and points them toward the right hand quadrant of my field of vision. Instantly, this part of the visual field is blackened in the form of a quarter-circle. She then directs the rods toward the lower right hand portion of the visual field, and it also blacks out. What an amazing experience. Now she's pointing the rods at the lower left hand and upper left hand quadrants, and they turn dark. She floats in the middle of a glittering multicolored diamond formed by the blackened quarter circles. It's a celestial sight beyond words. She looks at me. A warm and compassionate smile lifts her lips.

You will be given a sign, but you will not believe.

There's a sudden flash of the notebook I'm recording these dreams in. It has fallen into some deep snow. I pick it up, and wet snow falls from between its pages. The ink has run and all is ruined. I don't understand. With a smile and nod, she points the bundle of rods in my direction, and total darkness blinds me. My eyes reopen and I'm wide-awake in my humble apartment.

In spite of my utter exhaustion within the dream, I felt refreshed and invigorated.

I went to write the dream in my notebook before it was forgotten, but a quick glance at the clock revealed I was going to be late for work. Coaches can't be late, so I threw on my winter clothes and bounded down the stairs of my apartment building. I went to open the outside door, but it wouldn't budge. It appeared some fool had locked the door or propped up a chair against it. I peered out the window to see what was up.

There was more snow than I had ever seen before. It took all my strength to force the door open against the drift that blocked it. Flashbacks of the dream danced through my mind as I waddled through the waist-deep mire. It was tough going, but I arrived at work, only to discover the field house was closed. Everything in town was closed. Only the snowplows

could be heard above the howling wind. While trudging home, Rebecca's words echoed in my mind.

"You will be given a sign, but you will not believe. You will not believe."

It was not just another snowstorm. The meteorologists call the event the "Blizzard of '78." It was one of the largest Nor'easters on record. We had over three feet of snow, and a lot more in some places. The winds broke 110 miles per hour along the coastline, and at least a hundred people died, while over four thousand more were injured. Homes were washed away and power was knocked out far and wide. I had never experienced anything like it in my life.

I am a rational animal and seek a scientific basis for all things. Moreover, I was being influenced by the likes of Chomsky, Einstein, Nietzsche, Bohr, Freud, Santayana, and a host of other scientists, writers and academics who had no or little place for the idea of God in their constellation of opinions. It is often the case that our leading scholars opt to reject contemporary views of what God is rather than seek to discover what the term can be perceived to mean. I thus wasn't sure what to think about the dream. My subconscious mind might have spun an elaborate web over inputs that were received during the day about the coming storm. Yet I hardly listened to the news during those days. Perhaps the low air pressure produced an influence on the dream state, although there isn't much literature available concerning this subject. Maybe it was the future or past informing the present in ways I simply don't understand and never will.

So, I ask the reader, what would you believe if you were me? Was that blizzard the sign I asked for during the dream, as in the many religious stories passed down by various cultures? Were the record winds and snow a verification that something akin to what we call God actually exists? And is the doubt I felt at the time indicative of my ongoing disdain for belief verses the demonstrable truths science accords? The uncertainty some of you feel is why I was so plagued. Yet however much I might be in doubt, I had some reason to believe there is a causal nexus, a creator, God, physics, metaphysics, chemistry, a set of seminal ideas—however you wish to describe the source of our existence. Moreover, it's something that goes beyond mere words or beliefs. It's where thoughts and realities merge. At this stage, though, I only had some tenuous reason to believe there was a God, or whatever name one wants to use. The nature of God remained elusive, and exploring this issue became my goal.