Answer:

A dream is a series of thoughts, images, or emotions that occur involuntarily during sleep. These experiences are not planned or controlled by the individual. Dreams can reflect recent experiences, daily activities, emotions, or even the spiritual environment surrounding a person (see Ecclesiastes 5:3, Isaiah 29:8).

> Ecclesiastes 5:3 (ESV)
>
> For a dream comes with much business, and a fool’s voice with many words.

> Isaiah 29:8 (ESV)
>
> As when a hungry man dreams he is eating and awakes with his hunger not satisfied, or as when a thirsty man dreams he

> is drinking and awakes faint, with his thirst not quenched...

While some dreams are simply natural and psychological, the Bible also makes it clear that God can speak through dreams. For example:

Jacob’s dream of a ladder reaching to Heaven (Genesis 28:12)

Joseph’s prophetic dreams about his future role in Egypt (Genesis 37:5–10)

God’s warning to the Magi in a dream not to return to Herod (Matthew 2:12)

> Job 33:14–15 (ESV)
>
> For God speaks in one way, and in two, though man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds...

However, not all dreams are from God. Satan can also use dreams to deceive or intimidate, just as he uses other spiritual tactics. This is why discernment is crucial.

> Jeremiah 23:32 (ESV)
>
> Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams," declares the Lord, "and who tell them and lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness...

A vision, by contrast, occurs while a person is awake. It is a supernatural experience where God may reveal a message, an image, or a future event. Visions can happen in prayer, meditation, or even during everyday activity. Unlike imagination or daydreaming, visions are initiated by God, not by human effort.

In Scripture, we find many examples of divine visions:

Ananias' vision about Saul (Acts 9:10–12)

Peter's vision of the sheet from heaven (Acts 10:9–17)

Paul’s vision of the man from Macedonia (Acts 16:9–10)

John’s visions recorded in the Book of Revelation

> Numbers 12:6 (ESV)
>
> If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream.

Just like with dreams, not every vision is from God. Some visions may arise from psychological or physical factors, such as mental stress, trauma, or drug use. Others may be demonic counterfeits, especially in occult practices like witchcraft or spiritualism (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Does Every Christian Experience Dreams or Visions from God?

No. It’s a myth that every born-again believer must see visions or have prophetic dreams. While God promised in Joel 2:28 (fulfilled in Acts 2:17) that in the last days sons and daughters will prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams, this does not mean

that every believer will have these experiences.

> 1 Corinthians 12:29–30 (ESV)
>
> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

(Implied answer: No)

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are distributed according to His will, not according to our desire or effort. One may have a prophetic gift, while another has the gift of teaching or mercy (Romans 12:6–8). Not receiving visions does not mean a person is spiritually immature or unloved by God.

What Really Matters

What truly matters is not whether you receive visions or dreams, but whether you are born again and walking in obedience to Christ. The new birth—becoming a new creation in Christ—is what

determines your salvation.

> Galatians 6:15 (ESV)
>
> For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Jesus warned that on the Day of Judgment, many who prophesied, cast out demons, and performed miracles in His name will be rejected because they lived in disobedience.

> Matthew 7:22–23 (ESV)
>
> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name…?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.

So visions, dreams, and prophecy are not the test of holiness or the basis of salvation. Obedience to God, faith in Christ, and

walking in the Spirit are.

Final Thought:

Dreams and visions are biblical, but they must be tested and interpreted through Scripture and spiritual discernment. Whether or not you experience them, remain grounded in God’s Word and led by His Spirit.

> 1 John 4:1 (ESV)
>
> Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God...

God bless you richly.

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