

MARTIN LUTHER KING AND JOSEPH: DISCOVERING, AND SET- TING FREE, GOD'S DREAM

Dr. Virgil A. Wood and Ryan J. Hulbert, Ph.D.

• • •

God's dream for all of His children worldwide remains the same throughout all time. There have been specific individuals, groups, and locations throughout time where that dream has been shared and championed. There have been other times when that dream, has lain dormant in the hearts, minds, and lives of a remnant of people. The purpose of this message is to highlight examples of that dream being set free in the past, and provide an opportunity in the present to be part of a movement to strategically harness the hearts, souls, minds, and strengths, of individuals, resulting in a ripple effect of God's dream to be continually set free, just as King proclaimed "Free at last!"

WHAT IS GOD'S DREAM?

Bishop Desmond Tutu described God's dream and our possible role in it in this way:

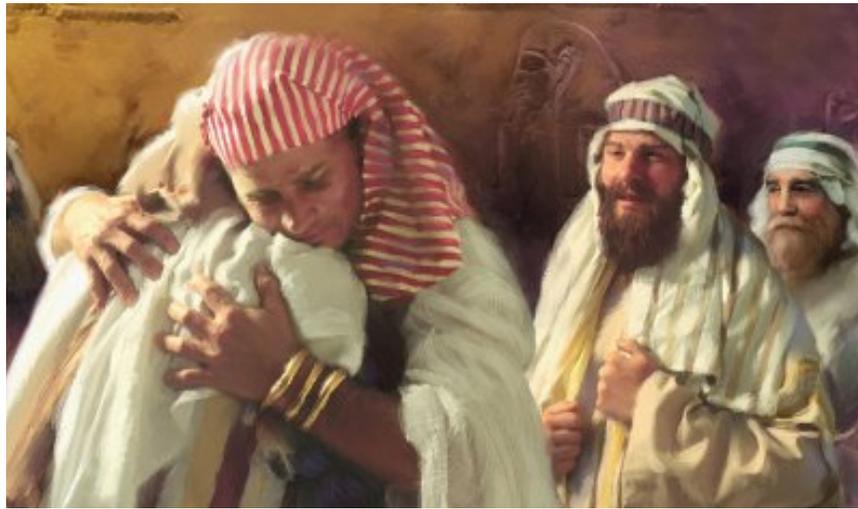
... before we can become God's partners, we must know what God wants for us. "I have a dream," God says. "Please help Me to realize it. It is a

dream of a world whose ugliness and squalor and poverty, its war and hostility, its greed and harsh competitiveness, its alienation and disharmony are changed into their glorious counterparts, when there will be more laughter, joy, and peace, where there will be justice and goodness and compassion and love and caring and sharing. I have a dream that swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks, that my children will know they are members of one family, the human family, God's family, My family." (God has a Dream: A vision of hope for our time, 2005, pp.19-20).

God's dream described above, can be seen in a simplified fashion of the elements of interpersonal harmony, and through the agricultural metaphors of plowshares and pruning hooks, sharing of food and physical prosperity. In other words, His dream can be seen as a vision of **caring** and **sharing**.

A DREAMER IN THE DISTANT PAST

As an example of an ancient sharer of God's Dream, let us put the spotlight on Joseph, the son of Jacob. We discover through his biography, with all the twists and turns in his life, a pathway for those who desire is to become faithful servants of God's dream. As a youth he had this Dream, which no one understood then, including himself. We learn from his biography that he was sold as a slave by his jealous brothers, brought by slave traders into Egypt, and spent 14 years in an Egyptian prison. However, through divine intervention, inspiration, resisting temptation, and tremendous personal effort, eventually he was a means of bringing much good to his captor nation then in famine, and to his own family, including the brothers who originally sold him into slavery.



One of the most tender scenes in all of the biblical record is Joseph forgiving his brothers, pledging to their abundant future, they together, weeping and reconciling. That reconciling only came about by mighty change of heart, on both Joseph's and his brothers' part. We see here the basic elements of God's dream shown in fixing broken hearts and feeding hungry stomachs, pathway through famine, to the abundance of Beloved Community and Beloved Economy, binary, and undivided.

Even though Joseph's life was filled with tremendous struggles, he later realized that his life was part of God's plan and dream: "And Joseph said to them[his brothers], Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (Genesis 50:19-20).

The lives of Joseph and his family were at the beginning of a 400-year period of time in Egypt, with much of that being as slaves in Egypt. Finally, after those 400 years, their then prophet and leader, Moses, led the nation of Israel out of bondage. Although Moses helped his nation come close to the promised land, he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land



THE DREAM MARCHES ON

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. emerged on the Lincoln Memorial Steps, August 28th, 1963 at the historic March on Washington, declaring “I Have A Dream”, culminating a Trek of over 250,000 marchers, from every nook and cranny of the nation.

This speech was shared also near the end of a 400-year period of time in the land that became the nation of the United States of America, and Martin Luther King Jr., emerged as an important National Leader. That nation was founded on the claim “that all people are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with the inalienable right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, though more in the breach, than the practice.

With those guiding light principles claimed from the very beginning of our nation, the realization of that dream has only gradually unfolded, and is not yet complete.

Clearly, we as a nation, have not yet fulfilled this dream of a promised land. Dr. King stated that he had been able to see this dream fulfilled in the future, because he had “Been to the mountaintop” where the vision of the dream was clearer. Several lines from Dr. King’s “I have a dream” speech are quoted below: “I have a dream that

one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.' "With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood."

Dr. King highlighted the concept of Beloved Community to describe the symphony of brotherhood and sisterhood. In addition, he spoke of a Beloved Community's Economy, which was necessary to fulfill the elements of God's dream of caring and sharing, of fixing broken hearts and feeding hungry stomachs.

Since Martin's dream was declared over 50 years ago, perhaps our nation has made some progress, but in many ways we have wandered in the wilderness, and not yet reached the promised land of the sacred dream of a beloved America.

THE DREAM BECKONS

Each of us need to answer for ourselves, in our time, deeply important questions concerning God's dream. In each of our individual lives, with the various twists and turns, we need to ask questions such as, "Am I part of a divinely inspired dream, or am I simply part of an earthly nightmare of strife and disunity?" "Did God mean for my experiences to result in good, to save much people alive?" "Am I helping God in fulfilling His dream of beloved caring communities and beloved sharing economies?"

We invite individuals to help Free the Dream. We believe that this will happen as individuals become part of a movement and take practical steps become a Beloved Citizen Neighbor. We have created a method for people to consider taking a pledge to join this movement and commit themselves to fulfilling the pledge.

THE PLEDGE IS THE FOLLOWING:

“I believe that all people, including myself, are of great worth, and are part of the same family of the human race. I pledge to improve myself, and to support people in their physical, educational, economic, and emotional needs. I further pledge myself to honor the Creator of the world by using one day in a week for devotion and renewal. I believe that these actions will result in overcoming poverty, discovering and raising beloved economic communities, globally, and locally.”



We invite you to join us in taking and following the pledge, enhancing our own souls, and thereby healing the soul of America. This movement need not take all of us to make a major difference, but does require some to step forward with love, faith and courage. Famous anthropologist Margaret Mead stated, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Regardless of what has gone on in the past, each of us in the present have the opportunity to choose for ourselves the pattern we will follow. We choose to follow the pledge, and invite you to do the same.



FUTURE OF THE DREAM

Beginning now, all interested persons can choose to be part of God's dream as the future unfolds. Beginning with each person, the unfolding ripple through families, neighborhoods, and communities, Beloved Citizen Neighbors can assist in healing the soul of our Nation.

To join this nation-wide movement, please go to the website driversedforthebrain.com and click on the Beloved Community tab. Then select USA, and then select either English or Spanish. All at no cost, you are invited to follow a 5-minute several step process of taking the pledge, downloading a personalized certificate, and then are given the opportunity of downloading two books designed to help equip you to be an even better Beloved Citizen Neighbor.



Dr. Virgil A. Wood is the author of *In Love We Trust: Lessons I learned from Martin Luther King, Jr. and Sr.*, and was a 10-year working associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and 16 additional years with Martin Luther King, Sr.

Ryan J Hulbert, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist and the author of *The Sun is Always Shining*, *Drivers' Ed for the Brain*, *Growth Rings*, *Are you Settling for Half of the Rainbow?*, and *Which came first, the Soul or the Ego?*