

Visions and dreams have been with us always, but that doesn't lessen the importance of trying to understand them, both universally and in each of our own particular circumstances. The 'Son of Man' phrase, which links the passage from David with the Transfiguration scene in Matthew's gospel, is also a clue to the incarnational nature of the symbolism which is being used here. This is not about a parallel universe but this one, seen in its true depth, or to quote from the New Collegeville Biblical Commentary:

The symbolic world becomes a way of speaking about the unseen spiritual realities that permeate the physical world. Thus history is shot through with divine purpose and activity, but the divine forces work in and through their earthly counterparts, not over and above them.

This is Jesus as both Son of God and 'Son of Man' – and us too, as members of Christ's body; which means that our own dreams and visions should be attended to, for we too live in age of heightened anxiety with Covid 19 which is but a stalking horse for the much greater threat of climate change and the collapse of human civilisation as we know it. Indeed, the two may not be unrelated. So the question becomes not only 'What is the world telling us through these dreams about our future state?' but 'What is God telling us through these dreams about our present state?' – and one could as well say this the other way round. 'Nothing happens by chance' is an oft quoted dictum about God's providence or presence within the workings of history, or better, the workings of our story, but it's really only saying that everything is connected, everything has a cause. When Jesus appears to the disciples, Peter, James and John, in all his glory, accompanied by Moses and Elijah, they are being told not only about *his* provenance but theirs, too. A provenance that will carry them through all the trials and tribulations which living in this world as human beings, necessarily entails, for whatever reason. Indeed, the meaning of this dream-like vision will only come home to them after his own period of acute suffering and death and in the equally dream-like vision of the resurrection. I choose my words carefully because 'dream-like' does not necessarily imply dream as a non-material reality. We are dealing here with a very physical activity shot through with the glory of God.

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