

## Dreams and Visions



Figure: Joseph's Dream, T'oros Roslin, 1260s (public domain: [source](#))

## Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*

In the roughest categorization, dreams are either **prognostic** or **agnostic**.

Only dreams experienced after the first period of sleep, i.e. after midnight, can be prognostic.



**Figure:** Macrobius?  
Copenhagen, Kgl. Bib. MS  
NKS 218, 4to (public  
domain: [source](#))

## Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Bearing</b>
Insomnium	Physiological/Psychological	None
Visum	Transition wake/sleep	None
Oraculum	Person of authority reveals future/truth	Revealing
Visio	Shows (future) events	Revealing
Somnium	Symbolic revelation of events	Revealing

# Biblical Dreamlore

- ▶ Genesis: Joseph
  - ▶ Pharaoh
  - ▶ Baker
  - ▶ Cupbearer
- ▶ Daniel: Daniel
  - ▶ Nebuchadnezzar
  - ▶ Belshazzar



Figure: Daniel at Belshazzar's Court (public domain: [source](#))

## 2 Corinthians 12:1–5

If I must glory (it is not expedient indeed), but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. **I know a man** in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one **caught up to the third heaven**. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not: God knoweth), That **he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter**. For such an one I will glory; but for myself I will glory nothing, but in my infirmities. (Douay-Rheims translation)

→ *Vision of Saint Paul*

→ *Vision of Drythelm*

→ *Vision of Tundalus*

# Middle English Dream Visions

## Triggers:

- ▶ Natural setting
- ▶ Sunny day in spring/summer
- ▶ Calming sonic features

## Content: confrontation with

- ▶ Supernatural characters (deities)
- ▶ Abstractions (Dowell, Dobet, Dobest)
- ▶ Speaking animals (bird debates)
- ▶ Higher social classes (*Book of the Duchess*)

# Chaucer's Dream Visions

- ▶ *Romaunt of the Rose*
- ▶ *Book of the Duchess*
- ▶ *House of Fame*
- ▶ *Parliament of Fowls*
- ▶ *Legend of Good Women*

Generally more Aristotelian than Macrobian, explaining dreams by the dreamer's distressed state of mind.