

NATIONAL BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
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exploring the nature and gift of
DREAMS

HOW TO
UNDERSTAND
YOUR
DREAM LANGUAGE



Lesson One:

The Master Dream Weaver

I. INTRODUCTION

God is the Master Dream Weaver. Through dreams, God communicates directly with us concerning our destiny as well as the destinies of our families, our nation, and our world. Many people today, particularly in the Western culture, never recognize God speaking to them in this way because they have been conditioned by a skeptical and sophisticated society to discount the language of dreams. Within our own generation, God is reconnecting us to a vital part of our spiritual heritage.

II. THE LANGUAGE OF HEAVEN

Over 200 times the scriptures give reference to dreams and visions. Three hundred times the scriptures refer to angels. God is a supernatural God, and He communicates to His people through supernatural means.

A. What Is A Dream?

A dream is a series of thoughts, images, or emotions that appear in our minds during sleep. Sometimes they are straightforward, but most of the time they are not. In the case of Holy Spirit-inspired dreams, often there is the need for careful interpretation, as these dreams tend to be parabolic in nature. In other words, like the parables of Jesus, the meaning of a dream is sometimes hidden.

B. Mark 4:10-13: As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables. And He was saying to them, “To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven.” And He said to them, “Do you not understand these parables? How will you understand all the parables?”

1. Jesus’ pattern of teaching was to speak in parables and mysteries—not to keep people in the dark, but to whet the appetite of those who were truly hungry for the truth. He wanted to draw them in so they would press forward to know more. He loves this journey of hooking us with revelation with the purpose of actually reeling us into His very heart.
2. Dreams and visions often use parabolic language. Like parables, dreams are mysteries that need careful deciphering. Dream language is the mystical language of Heaven.

C. Mark 4:22-25: “For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” And He was saying to them, “Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides. For whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.”

1. Things are hidden for a divine purpose: the purpose of being revealed. God is going to speak secrets to you – things that in the beginning you might not quite comprehend and understand. But as you go on the journey and you receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation, you will learn how to understand mysteries and secrets.
2. We need to be attentive. Listening is in many ways is a lost art, but it’s a vital skill we need to learn in order to become fluent in dream language.

III. GROUNDED IN THE WORD

Walking in the fullness of the Spirit is like sailing. We must learn to put up the sail to catch the wind, so as to be driven along by the wind. That is like the moving of the Holy Spirit. We also need to have an anchor that gets dropped beside our boat, which is like the Word of God. At times we need to go into the harbor and drop the anchor, rest, meditate on the Word of God, and get refueled. But then there are other times you pick up your anchor (you carry the Word of God with you), you put up the sail, you catch the wind, and go where the Holy Spirit leads you. The anchor – the Word of God – is what grounds us, and what serves as a solid foundation.

A. Numbers 12:6: “Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream.”

God says that He will speak to His people in a dream and He will make Himself known in a vision. He uses both of these instruments to draw us into His purposes.

B. Job 33:14-18: “Indeed God speaks once, or twice, yet no one notices it. In a dream, a vision of the night, when sound sleep falls on men, while they slumber in their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction, that He may turn man aside from his conduct, and keep man from pride; He keeps back his soul from the pit, and his life from passing over into Sheol.”

Our minds are often so preoccupied that it is hard for us to hear God. If He cannot catch our attention during our waking hours, He will speak to us during our sleep through dreams. Our heavenly Father will use dreams and visions as an avenue of identifying the hindrances that are in our path to His purpose.

- C. Joel 2:28-29:** “It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

Dreams and visions are a major part of the prophetic outpouring of God’s great love in the last days!

D. Hebrew Old Testament Words

Three very similar Hebrew words are used in the Old Testament to refer to dreams. Whichever word is used, the Old Testament makes clear that God is the Master Dreamer. He downloads His dreams within us and thereby transforms us into dreamers as well.

1. **Chalam:** “to cause to dream” or “to be a dreamer”
2. **Chelem:** “to dream”
3. **Chalom:** “dreamer”

E. Greek New Testament Words

1. **Onar:** the common word for “dream.” It is the kind of dreaming we all do when we sleep. God can and does use these common dreams to communicate with ordinary people. Example: Joseph’s dreams to wed Mary, escape to Egypt, and then return home, and the dreams of the wise men who are told not to return to Herod (Matthew 1 and 2; also see Matthew 27:19).
2. **Enupnion:** refers to a vision or a dream received while asleep. *Enupnion* stresses a surprise quality that is contained in that dream. It is the kind of dream that has a startling effect, like waking suddenly from a dream and finding yourself strangely alert with your senses particularly acute. Also see Jude, verses 8 and 10.

IV. HISTORIC CLIPS

Cessationism has done great damage in the church. Cessationism is the basic teaching that the spiritual gifts stopped when the canon of scriptures closed, or when the last apostle passed away. The good news is that the book of Hebrews says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. The truth is that the false doctrine of cessationism is going to cease because God's Word says, "I'm going to pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." What God did then, God does today, and God will continue to always do. Dream language is the language of the ages. It is this mysterious way that God comes into our lives, invades our uncomfortable zones, and simply comes to speak to us.

A. Early Church Fathers

Great portions of the church father's writings about dreams and visions have only recently been translated into English, and have, therefore, been largely ignored in the past.

- Thomas of India received instruction from his dreams.
- Polycarp was given a vision of his martyrdom.
- Irenaeus had wise understanding of dreams.
- Clement believed that dreams come from the depth of the soul.
- Tertullian devoted eight chapters of his writings to dreams.
- Gregory of Nyssa spoke of the meaning and the place of the dream.
- John Chrysostom, the one who was called "golden mouthed" because he had such oratorical grace upon him, called dreams the source of revelation.
- Constantine was directed in a dream regarding the heavenly sign that he was to carry into battle.
- Thérèse de Lisieux changed her life because of a dream.
- John Newton, an early slave trader, was stopped in his tracks in his lifestyle and vocation by a dream from God. This became the man who was so turned around in his life that he eventually became a chaplain to the King of England. He went on to write the hymn that is possibly one of the greatest Protestant hymns of all ages, "Amazing Grace."

B. Abraham Lincoln

It was said that Abraham Lincoln had a dream in which he saw his own body lying in state when he was President. I wonder what effect the dream had upon Abraham Lincoln and how it was used to help prepare him to be able to meet his Maker at any moment.

C. Rev. A.J. Gordon

The following is an amazing dream that impacted a man who became one of the great pulpiteers in America. The Gordon Conwell Seminary in Boston, Massachusetts, is named after him. The Rev. A. J. Gordon, a famous Baptist preacher of Boston, told of a dream that drastically changed his ministry, even though he had never paid attention to dreams before this.

“I was in the pulpit before a full congregation, just ready to begin my sermon, when a stranger entered and passed slowly up the aisle as though silently asking with his eyes if someone would give him a seat. Halfway up the aisle, a gentleman stepped out and offered him a place in his pew, which was quietly accepted. As I began my sermon, my attention became riveted on this hearer. I said constantly to myself, ‘Who can that stranger be?’ After the service ended, the visitor had left before I could reach him. The gentleman with whom he had sat remained behind, however. I asked him, ‘Can you tell me who that stranger was who sat in your pew this morning?’ In the most matter-of-course way he replied: ‘Why, do you not know that man? It was Jesus of Nazareth.’”¹

The dream was the seminal event out of which came a complete change in Gordon’s approach to ministry and a vivid transformation in his parishioners. This dream is written in his book, *How Christ Came To Church: The Pastor’s Dream*. A. J. Gordon never preached a sermon again to please men. He preached as though his guest was the Man Christ Jesus, and he preached to please Him.

V. THE RECEIVER

The secret to becoming a good dreamer is to become a good receiver. God did not only send dreams to those who believed in Him, but also to unbelievers because He wants their hearts to turn to Him.

A. Dreams to Prophets

1. Abraham (Gen. 15:12-17)
2. Jacob (Gen. 28:12; 31:10)
3. Daniel (Dan. 7)

B. Dreams to Unbelievers

1. Abimelech (Gen. 20:3)
2. Laban (Gen. 31:24)
3. Midian (Judges 7:13-14)

4. Pharoah's Butler and Baker (Gen. 40:5)
5. Pharoah (Gen. 41:7 &15-26)
6. Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:1, 4, 36)
7. Wisemen (Matt. 2:12)
8. Pilate's Wife (Matt. 27:19)

C. Dreams to Other Believers

1. Solomon (I Kings 3:5)
2. Joseph (Matt. 1:20)

VI. THE TRANSMITTER

Every receiver needs a transmitter. In human experience, dream transmission originates from any one of three different sources:

A. Personal God (II Pet. 2:1, Acts 27:15-17)

B. Natural Man (Ezek. 13:1-6, Jer. 23:16)

C. Demonic Darkness (Acts 16:16-18)

VII. THE PURPOSE

Proverbs 25:2: "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search it out."

It's the glory of a king for something to be searched out. You're a king and God gives you the right to go into the King's palace. He wants to give you the keys of revelation to be able to search something out. Being able to understand revelation is about being a son, a daughter. It's about kingship. What are dreams for? To whet your appetite, because if you're left musing, you're more likely to find out what the dream was all about.

VIII. THE INVITATION

God has a dream for your life, and He wants you to have the spirit of revelation upon your life. He has a great plan, and He wants to use these ways to speak to you. Perhaps you will be a Joseph and you'll have a dream, and you'll blab it prematurely, and then get in all kinds of trouble and end up learning about the ways of God – not just the knowledge of God. May God raise up such a people in the earth that the world will come and say, "Behold, here comes the dreamer."

We live for Christ, but we also live to release the fragrance of His presence wherever we go. I don't want to live an ordinary life; I want to live a supernatural life that would cause people to say, "Who is that strange man crying in the wilderness? Behold, here is a dreamer."

Lord, I ask for Your grace, and that the Spirit of wisdom and revelation would be released to us. Dream through us and weave an incredible tapestry for the world to see. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

Reflective Questions

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Answers to these questions can be found in the back of the study guide.

1. We have been conditioned by a _____ and _____ society to discount the language of dreams. God wants to reconnect us to a vital part of our spiritual _____.

2. A dream is _____

3. Jesus spoke in parables and mysteries, not to keep people in the dark, but to _____ the appetite of those who are truly _____ for the truth.

4. Our heavenly Father will use dreams and visions as an avenue of identifying the _____ that are in our path to His purpose.

5. Hebrews 13:8 says that Jesus Christ is the _____, yesterday, today and forever. What God did in the Bible, God does _____, and God will continue to always do.

6. The secret to becoming a good dreamer is to become a good _____.

7. List four unbelievers and four believers in the Bible God spoke to through dreams.

8. List the three sources of dream transmission:

9. Write down below a recent dream you had. Reflect upon its source and if it was parabolic in nature. Ask the Master Dream Weaver to speak to you through dreams and release the spirit of revelation upon your life.

End Notes

¹ A.J. Gordon, *How Christ Came to Church: A Spiritual Autobiography* (New York, NY: Revell, 1895), 63, quoted in Kelsey, *God, Dreams, and Revelation*, 163-164.