

Understanding Prophetic Dreams

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being grounded in God's Word, wisdom, and prayer to discern His direction and voice amidst challenging times. It cautions against solely relying on dreams or external sources for guidance, highlighting the need for biblical literacy and discernment. The speaker encourages a focus on prayer, seeking confirmation from God, and fostering hope and encouragement in the midst of uncertainty.

Scripture: Proverbs 2:6, James 1:5, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Jeremiah 33:3, 1 John 4:1, 2 Timothy 3:16, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 3:5, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Biblical Literacy", "Discernment in Prayer"

Description

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Transcript

Do you believe though that God prepares His people? And four primary ways that you'll need to pay attention to are His Word. His Word and His wisdom. I should probably clarify.

We look to His Word and from the Word we get wisdom, right? But you have to remember that just reading His Word is not wisdom. You have knowledge. But wisdom actually acts out what is in His Word.

And the power of God's Word is not in the knowledge of it. Many people know it. It's in the wisdom of it.

It's in the acting out of it. And Christians like never before are going to have to really live in God's Word. Because as I'm reading His Word and I read, you know, a gentle answer turns away wrath.

Ah, I might need that today. Be quick to listen, slow to speak. Oh, I might need that today.

And then I camp out in Psalms first season. The Lord is your strength. The Lord is your banner.

The Lord is your refuge. Who is going to come against Almighty God? And that builds me up again after CNN just broke me down. Right? And oh, the world's falling apart.

You remind yourself who God is. And you have to live in the Word. This is separating casual Christianity from Spirit-filled believers like nothing I've ever seen before.

And this is why you're seeing a lot of, and I get this all the time, people wanting advice on why are my kids, I raise them in the Lord, or why are my friends, where's this huge divide? They're supporting movements. And they're saying, what's going on? I guarantee you that they are not spending any time in God's Word. They're being led astray.

They're being led by the beliefs and opinions of the world, the world's mindset. Be not conformed to this world, the world's mindset, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So those who are in God's Word are often on the same page, amen? And those who are not, so pray for the 20-year-olds.

Pray for the millennials. Pray, they need to just get grounded in God's Word. This is a spiritual attack.

It's a spiritual assault. And I'm not disengaged with millennials. I'm not putting them down.

I mean, I'm not that old. My wife is barely a millennial by one year. So, you know, we're in there.

So I guess I'm kind of, you know, talking to her age group too, and barely mine. And we all have to get back to the truth of God's Word. That is our anchor.

And so what you're seeing is people not educated in the Word of God. And someone recently, a high profile figure in ministry, Jen Hatmaker, just embraced her daughter's lesbianism and then being gay. She says, I'm so proud of my daughter being gay.

So people are left confused. But really, you shouldn't be because if you've been following her ministry, you see that the fruit is being evident and they don't look to the Bible. And it just makes me mad.

I say, well, I have to love my kid and I don't shame them. And you can still love your kid and not agree with their lifestyle. Actually, true love, true love is parents who not agree with a wrong lifestyle.

They love you. Hey, I love you no matter what, but you know what my stance is. You speak the truth in love.

So that's why you're seeing a huge divide is because it's biblically illiteracy. Let's just call it what it is. The Word of God is not the inerrant, authoritative, final source of truth.

That's why you'll hear, well, here's what I think. Here's what I think Paul meant. Well, Jesus didn't talk about that back then.

And see, it's not their final authority. Their opinion is. And that's actually what they, when you hear the term liberal theology, that's what that means.

Liberal theology is man's opinion is more important than God's opinion. Now, of course, there are gray areas, things we call non-essentials. End times, for example.

But on the essentials, you've gotta be right on. Right on the money with that. So, God prepares His people through His Word, through wisdom, and through prayer.

Now, don't let that just go in one ear and out the next. Prayer is actually positioning. Prayer positions your heart to hear from God.

We need to start finding more time for prayer and less time for the media. The more closer you draw to God through prayer, the more you'll be able to sense His direction. And so many people have heard of George Mueller.

Have you? He raised millions and millions and millions of dollars for his orphanages in the 1800s without even asking for a dime. And people are like, well, that's amazing, Shane. Well, do you wanna know his prayer routine? I don't think you do.

Three, four hours a day? Martin Luther said, how do you spend three hours in prayer, Luther? He said, I'm too busy not to pray. See, that has to be the priority. That's where you're going to get your gauge of truth.

That's where you're gonna hear God's voice. It's not a quick little, well, let me pray, and okay, we pray. That has to be your life beat.

However you fit it in. And of course, to people who don't wanna pray, I can hear the excuses already, but Shane, you don't know my schedule. Well, I do know this.

If it was important, you would be there. If you had front seat to the Lakers, you would be there. Well, yeah, but that's different.

No, it's not, it's priorities. That's what this is about. This is all about priorities.

If you were so serious about God, you would put that television in the garage for a month and say, God, I'm gonna seek you. That's how important things are. Because we prioritize, don't we? We prioritize things that are important to us.

So it's not that we don't have time, it's that we don't want to make time for this priority. And I just wanna encourage you, you're going to have to become people of prayer. That's how you're going to gauge where God is leading and directing you.

And of course, finally, there's many ways to hear God's voice, but we hear God's voice through the preaching of his word. Hence the need for the type of sermon today, because you're going to be hearing a lot of competing voices out there. I think we already get a taste of that right now, of those of us who are on media and listening to a lot of different voices.

So, here we go, are you ready? First, let me talk about the video that's out there because it is, the reason I wanna talk about it, it's prompting a lot of people to make decisions or move or sell or buy guns and ammunition and buy tons of food. And I just drove by Costco lines back again, thank you, governor. Are we really going back to March and April? I mean, I need to wake up, right? I mean, get out of this twilight zone I'm in.

So anyway, what do we do with dreams? Well, you need to know a couple of things. This isn't a sermon on dreams, but I do wanna address it right now. And by the way, the person who had this dream and it went viral and now it's affecting many Christians, there's videos on both sides of it.

I believe this, that he was sincere. I don't, I'm not tying in the false prophet, you know, tie in right here. I believe he was sincere.

I believe God, you know, I believe he dreamed those things. I have no reason to doubt his sincerity, but I do wanna talk about it for a minute. And we do have examples of dreams in the Bible.

A Pharaoh, correct, had a dream and Joseph interpreted it and it saved the people from the famine. Daniel had a dream. Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus had a dream.

The wise man had a dream. Paul had a dream. Come to Macedonia.

And Paul was able. So we don't wanna discount dreams. I'm not that kind of person.

I don't think we should be. But be careful when you allow them to control your life because I don't see God using dreams very often to totally control our lives over the word of God. We have the word of God, we have prayer, but he will.

And I could give you 10 examples of dreams that God has given me. I told you one about, I had that dream of that black panther that wouldn't move from the light. And that day I met with the Jehovah Witness dressed in black and it was the exact same.

So I believe God prepared me for that. Now you could say, that's just chance. I'm like, okay, maybe, but I'll take it.

It didn't affect anything I do. There are other dreams that God will use to confirm. So I'm not against dreams, but I'm also leery of those people who have dreams often.

And God is always doing this through dreams, but they're never in his word. And usually you can actually become very unstable because the enemy can plant thoughts, a guy can plant thoughts, guess what? A bad pizza can plant thoughts. Have you ever heard that? Do you know why they do that? It's because they're tying in.

Now we understand it better because the microbiome in your gut actually can affect deeply your thoughts and your health. And overall, your gut is tied to your brain, if you can believe that or not. What you eat can really influence, just study it and you're probably going, Shane, what are you talking about? Trust me, it's called microbiome and they're just now studying it.

You've heard probiotics, right? The big thing right now. But that can really tie in how we feel and how we think. And the scriptures say that the prophet who has a dream, let him tell his dream.

And he who has my word, let him speak my word faithfully. So what do we do in these situations? First, you have to look at the character of the person. Is there fruit? Is there godly character? Is there sincerity? Sincerity, is there humility? At the end of their vision and their dream, do they say now, order here for this \$55 preparedness package where you can get food that'll last 10 years? Is there a tie in here? Are you promoting something? Also, we can look at the dream and say, is it biblical? Is the dream biblical? So in his case, I won't get into a lot of detail.

Or just in, this might be for those who haven't seen it, just in general, the Bible is often focused more on hope than it is doom and gloom. Are you aware of that? There's doom and gloom. And the prophets would preach doom and gloom, but then they would come back and say, but if you turn to God, if you rend your hearts and not your garments, if you get back to the one true and living Yahweh, if you come with your hearts right before Him, He will restore, He will rebuild.

So you have the doom and gloom, but you have the hope. There has to be a hope and encouragement. So I did not see that in this video at all.

I didn't see that. I was left with like, buy guns, buy ammo, it's going down. I'm not sensing that.

I'm actually sensing a spiritual awakening. I'm sensing revival and restoration, renewal. I don't think we're tanking just yet.

I think there's a process of going down, but I also believe that in the darkest hour, God rises up, voices, and He also brings a spiritual awakening. And I guess I can just tell you right off the bat, nobody knows. Nobody knows the future.

Could everything He said happen? Absolutely. Without a shadow of a doubt, we are on the brink of a major collapse if it wasn't for God Almighty. But I've noticed, and how many times have I said this? The church is not ready yet.

People are still, prayer meetings, whatever. So God will often use these things. Isn't it interesting, throughout the Old Testament, when I bring sword, when I bring famine, and when I bring pestilence, when I bring the sword, civil unrest, when I bring famine, it could happen.

And when I bring pestilence, well, what is that? That's what a virus could be, COVID, anything. So these things often come, often as God's judgment, but also in order to wake the people up, to get back and to turn back, and to seek Him with all of their heart, with all of their strength. So that would be my thought on this prophecy that he gave, is that it wasn't left with hope.

Really, it was doom and gloom. He even talked about having Russian and Chinese soldiers in Washington, D.C. Now, I'll tell you that, if that ever happened, America's done. So many people don't see that yet.

Could it happen? Maybe so. But I think we need to be careful and not allow this to put doom and gloom in us. I think it should foster hope.

And any time you have a dream, or people have a dream, they're not 100% accurate, because God works through imperfect vessels. And you'll see often that if people, have you ever received a prophetic word that wasn't always right on? It's because we like to add hamburger helper. Like, let's say God gives somebody this, and then they're gonna tie in a little bit here, tie in a little bit here, and God says, no, I just give you this.

So I think sometimes people get excited, or they dream things, and they put things together. But I believe that God is looking for a remnant. A friend of mine, Greg Gordon, said this, God can gift people, but it is something else when a man is in favor with God, and when God can say, for this man's sake, I will not judge this city, and I will show favor to this church.

I believe, this is why I get encouraged, you see millions of people. Let's just, okay, me and be realistic. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of solid Christians seeking the heart of God, praying and fasting and contending.

I believe that can stay the judgment hand of God. There are tons of Old Testament examples of this, that God says, I relented from what I was going to do because of that remnant called out to me and cried out to me and turned back to me. So that's why we don't just give up and give in, that's why we press in and allow, we don't know what God will do.

The scripture says, how do you know that God will not leave a blessing behind him? How do you not know that God will not give you a measure of revival in your bondage? So that's always our position, and I just did not see that whatsoever in the video. And anytime something makes me go out and be reactive, you know, like, and I'm Second Amendment, I got it, I was in Trap Shooting Association, I shot a lot of skeet, trap, different things, I got it. But when we run out and that's our source, that's our strength, that, okay, this AR-15 and 1,500 rounds of ammunition, that, now I'm ready, no, you're not ready.

That's why I say your gun safes are full, but your prayer closets are empty. Now again, I believe, and we did a podcast yesterday, we'll be releasing on why I believe self-defense is biblical. Nothing wrong with that.

Why the founding fathers put that in the Constitution was for this very reason, because it was a government of the people, by the people to elect representatives, and when that government begins to be a terror and a tyranny to those who it's governing, that those people have the opportunity to defend themselves. So it's biblical, and it's also in the Constitution for a reason. However, too many people are trusting in that.

So example, I hear that video, I go to Walmart, go wherever, and everything, everyone's out of ammo, everyone's out of guns, why didn't it press me to go to the prayer closet? And so see, again, I'm not questioning sincerity, not a false prophet, he could be right, we'll know at the end of the year, that's for sure, but there are some things that really stood out in a lot of the minds of us who were listening. And also, Paul talked about the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets. That just means when somebody gives a prophetic word or says something, it has to come under the discernment of spiritual believers.

They have to weigh that. You can't just have some loose cannons out there saying things and people bow down to it. It has to come under.

So if solid believers are questioning this, then there's something too that has to be subject to what mature, spirit-filled believers are saying. And I want to remind you that colonial America was at a low point when the Great Awakening cleansed the land and England was as well when George Whitefield's fiery sermons burned the chaff. God totally brought a spiritual awakening.

And I'm not just trying to be optimistic, I believe that is our only hope. So again, pray about it, especially if you're gonna make decisions on this. Dreams are not always 100% accurate.

We need to be spending a lot more time in God's word. God will often speak to us through unifying voices. And I believe there should have been a lot more hope and encouragement as well.

So that's kind of my thoughts on it. I didn't want to get into a big debate on this and spend a whole sermon on it. But we just need to be careful in this area.

I would pray for confirmation is what I would do. Say, if you see something like that, Lord, I'm praying for confirmation. Show me what is of you and what's not.

I think God will lead us when we pray that, don't you? You know, the coin shortage that he talked about, well, that's actually been out a little while. I mean, that's not necessarily new. And you're seeing that a lot more now, aren't you? If you're out about Chick-fil-A, Home Depot, or Lowe's.

I've got people texting me from Tennessee that there's a big coin shortage. And it's not improbable that the economy could start to really teeter. And that we could be, so I would say it's very wise to be strategic right now with your finances.

Very wise. I wouldn't be overspending, I would be saving, I would have some cash on hand. That's just wisdom.

Jesus, you know, in one case he said, don't take a sword, don't take a money bag, don't take a pair of shoes, I'll provide for you. But then he says, by the way, grab a sword, bring a money bag, prepare. Now, that doesn't seem, no, because there's different seasons in life.

So if you can make changes to just be prepared, how is that not wise to be prepared? You know, now some people might say, well, I'm just gonna trust God, I don't have anything in the bank. And that works too, if that's where God has you. But there's no harm in being prepared if you can.

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