

# Encountering Jeff Weeden's Bible Teaching: The Tree of Life & the A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool

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Jeff Weeden is the founder of Way of an Eagle Ministries. He pastors a church at 5901 East Avenue Hodgkins, Il. 60525. Half a dozen Illinois sister churches are listed on his web site at wayofaneagle.org, as well as six others in three other states. He also hosts reveal2.org. The quotations in this paper come either from Weeden's web sites or from Weeden's taped messages in the author's possession and such passages will appear, in this paper, indented and italicized—as do longer Bible passages.

Typographical errors always find their way into documents. Please email such errors to me: webmaster@mazeministry.com

## Introduction

### How I Got Into This

I first heard of Jeff Weeden through a friend who told me that one of *his* friends suddenly dropped out of the church he and his family attended and was, instead, having church meetings in his home. The meetings were centered around the taped messages of a man from out of the area. My friend told me that as a result of listening to these messages his friend was becoming increasingly suspicious and critical of all churches. He also said that his friend told him that these taped messages introduced a new, revolutionary way to study the Bible.

I was immediately concerned about the situation. I knew my friend's friend, and I knew the pastor of the church were both attended. The pastor is a man I respect. My friend continued to mention this situation over the ensuing weeks. What I heard warned me that this teaching might be venturing into dangerous spiritual territory.

I went to Jeff Weeden's web site and was troubled even further by what I read. For example, the following paragraph suggests that Weeden may take himself a little too seriously:

*Jeff Weeden is Senior Pastor of Way of an Eagle Ministries and is the founder and President of Reveal 2 Ministries. Everything that he teaches has been received by dream, vision, or the mouth of God. Jeff has been commanded and sent by God to reveal the hidden things of the Spirit. Through Jeff's teaching*

*of what God has revealed unto him the identity of the hidden man of sin is exposed. He is able is [stet.] destroy deceitful teachings, expose anti-Christ, avenge the Beast, the False Prophet, and Whore, and desolate Babylon through scriptural understanding of the parabolic language of the Spirit.*

The next thing I heard was that my friend's pastor had publicly denounced Weeden, calling him a heretic.

Finally, I was approached by a married couple with whom I have been friends for more than twenty years who informed me that Weeden was coming to town and asked me to attend one of the meetings. This couple attended the same church mentioned above. I asked the woman who invited me to attend the meetings, "Do you want me to attend because you want me to check out Mr. Weeden, or are you asking me because you think I might learn something important from his teaching?" She answered, "Probably a little of both."

In the mean time a few others were interested in getting my opinion on this matter. I got involved reluctantly. I don't feel like I have time to check out every minor new prophet who appears on the scene, I have my hands full dealing with people caught up in well-established cults like Mormonism. However, I now had several friends asking me to look into the matter. With reluctance, I attended one of Weeden's meetings.

## The Meeting I Attended.

I attended a meeting Weeden held at the Shiloh Inn in Boise, Idaho. I knew several of those in attendance. Weeden seemed to be good-natured, likable, and sincere. From some of the things he said, I got the impression he had spent time as a minister in Pentecostal church.

Beyond attending his meeting personally, I read dozens of pages of material downloaded from his web sites and I listened to hours of his recorded messages. My conclusion, after studying his teachings, is that Weeden has made some important and costly doctrinal mistakes. He has taken a path that is leading him further and further *away* from sound doctrine. Unfortunately, I am afraid Weeden may have gone too far to come back. Not that he has gone so far God would not have him back, rather he has gone so far he probably couldn't find his way back. I base this sad judgment upon my experience with similar spiritual innovators over the past 30 years.

One thing I am certain of: Weeden's Bible interpretation method is absolutely wrong. In addition some doctrines he teaches are clearly heretical.<sup>(1)</sup>

My hope and prayer is that Jeff Weeden will humble himself and reverse his slide into heresy, but—I repeat—I see that as unlikely.

## Weeden's Foundation

Weeden teaches four basic errors:

- I. All scripture is a parable.
- II. Dreams and visions are the only way God speaks to people.
- III. Building upon I and II above, Weeden has developed a new method to interpret scripture. Weeden teaches that God has shown him how to decode scripture (through a process Weeden calls, "Letting Scripture Interpret Scripture)." He is producing a dictionary, called "The A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool."
- IV. People who reject this new teaching of God are carnal minded and almost certainly doomed.

## Error I: "...And without a parable spake he not unto them." (Matt. 13:34.)

Weeden teaches:

*The doctrine of Jesus is parable. Doctrine is referred to in the Scriptures as parable, proverb, shadow, dark sayings, allegory, similitudes, dark speeches, riddle, mysteries, Words of the Book, and Prophecy. Because the Scriptures are written in this language of God, God must interpret it. Parables are riddles which need interpretation. (reveal2.org web site)*

(NOTE: Much of the material quoted from reveal2.org and wayofaneagle.org have been removed from the Internet. I suspect this is because they opened up avenues for criticism of Weeden. He did say, in the meeting I attended, "When you teach this stuff they will call you a heretic.")

There is no way to overemphasize Weeden's commitment to the idea that every word of scripture is

“prophecy” and cannot be understood in any natural sense. For Weeden, prophecy or any revelation from God always comes in a dream or vision and is in “spiritual” or coded language so that it cannot be understood on any level by the natural mind. God never uses plain, natural language which can be understood by the mind, but in every case it needs to be interpreted. Simple declarative sentences like John 4:4 “And he must needs go through Samaria,” are pregnant with deep spiritual meaning.

Obviously Weeden is *correct* when he says that the Bible contains teachings in parables and that Jesus often spoke in parables, but he is *wrong* to say that Jesus *only* spoke in parables or that all doctrine is found in dark speeches, riddles, and mysteries.

As a matter of fact, Christianity offers the most open, bold, frank declaration of truth of all religions. Christianity, unlike mystery religions, really has no secrets. It’s teachings and doctrines are open and plain to all who would study them. Jesus made that clear at his illegal trial before the Jewish leadership:

*The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.*

*Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. (John 18:19-20)*

## Out of Context

Weeden quotes Matthew 13:34 to suggest that Jesus *only* spoke in parables:

*34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:*

But Weeden is guilty of taking this verse out of context. *In context*, we find that the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew describes a scene in which Jesus is addressing a multitude:

*The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.*

*And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.*

*And he spake many things unto them in parables (Matthew 13:1-3)*

Jesus, in this setting, tells several wonderful stories to the multitude: The parable of the sower; the parable of the tares; the parable of the mustard seed; the parable of the leaven. And—on that occasion—Jesus only spoke to the crowd in parables. But that does not mean Jesus *always* spoke in parables as Weeden claims.

## Parables

### Weeden and Parables

For Weeden the Bible is all prophecy, it is not history. It is never history. He ridicules the idea that the Garden of Eden was in what we now call Iraq because God—in the Book of Revelation—depicts the Tree as being in heaven. So Weeden concludes the Genesis Tree of Life must have been in heaven—hence the Garden of Eden was not on the earth—ever—it was in heaven! And Moses did not encounter Pharaoh in Egypt, because Pharaoh, Weeden explains, is the Devil. So, again, the Moses-Pharaoh encounter is spiritual and did not happen on this earth. Likewise, Weeden teaches that an angel cannot appear to a man in the form of a man. This is wrong, according to Weeden, and it, “...will have you picking up hitchhikers that could be mass murderers, giving money that you worked hard for to bums that won’t work, thinking you’re entertaining an angel.

Everything in the Bible, at one time or another in Weeden’s thinking, is spiritual and not physical and never historical. As Weeden says:

*Jerusalem, the city of peace. This is a joke! The city of peace is the biggest disaster on this planet! If it’s over there and they’re fighting over it—you gotta go over there and see the history of it. The west bank is like a development of homes the size of Naperville. That’s the West Bank. Bunch of rocks, it’s a rock pile. You got a desert over there. You got a bunch of folks fighting, throwing rocks, shooting each other. And there biggest tourist attraction is the Christian that believes that everything happened here and they [who live over there] don’t even believe that.*

*And when Peter Jennings gets on the special, he gets criticized from the congregation of the dead or [those of]the carnal mind [who are]trying to serve God **because he tells the truth and says there’s no***

**physical history of a man named Jesus that ever lived!**

Weeden ridicules the idea of a Conquering Jesus coming in clouds of glory because such a scene can never happen in the natural world:

*He's gonna pop in the clouds--that's it. Cause we don't know what a cloud is because we don't use scripture to interpret scripture. So he's gonna pop in a cloud and everybody's gonna see him. What about China? Hmm! U-h-h! Well, God can do anything! That's what you gotta say. That's how you backtrack out of your lie. "God can do anything." No, he'll put a cloud in China at nighttime. You think so? Or maybe you need to understand what a cloud is.*

To say Jesus was crucified 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem is a mistake. That is natural thinking—carnal thinking:

*The carnal mind says Jesus Christ was crucified 2,000 years ago on this planet. The Bible says he was crucified from before the foundations of the world. . . And when you open that Bible your carnal mind will deceive you. It will bring you into its own understanding. It will damn your soul. You've got to let the mind of Christ and the mind of the spirit and the Word of God interpret the Word of God to get the perception of what God has been trying to teach us. Let the Bible tell you where he was crucified.*

All of these distinctions Weeden makes are unfamiliar, he says, to Christians (who he calls the congregation of the dead) because we think the Bible is “history.” We refuse to let it all be and always be “prophecy.”

Weeden is correct that the carnal mind cannot understand spiritual matters. But that does not mean that historical events recorded in the Bible are coded prophecy. The human mind is capable of understanding that the Lord parted the Red Sea in real history. But for Weeden such events are only dreams and visions recorded to be interpreted by the spiritual mind.

Everyone, he maintains, are carnally minded if they do not submit to his outlandish idea that every event in the Bible is referencing some prophetic idea that is not a real event in human history. It's one way or the other:

*So you have two things. You have the carnal and you have the spiritual. Now the carnal mind says that the scriptures are history. . . But the scripture teaches that the Bible is inspired. . . it's prophecy. So the scriptures are prophecy written. . . Is it prophecy or is it history? **Did it all happen here or is it a dream and a vision written?** . . . So when God speaks, when the prophet or the seer hears the word of the Lord, it comes by the dream and the vision. When you are reading the scripture you are reading prophecy. It is the dream or the vision written. It is not physical history.*

When Weeden decides that the scriptures are “dreams and visions written,” he says the carnal mind misses the opportunity to know what the words in scripture really mean:

*So the carnal mind teaches the scriptures are physical history. They also teach that you don't need to interpret the scripture. . . I know what a tree is, I know what a seed is. I know what a beast is, I know what all these things are. I do not need—I've had several preachers tell me this—“I do not need to interpret the Bible, I know what it is saying.”*

But are these preachers indeed saying that scriptural passages never have to be interpreted? Of course not! They are simply saying that much scripture is, indeed, history. Although there are allusions, allegories, and parables in the Bible, for the most part it is the record of real events occurring in real time on a real planet—the planet earth.

For Weeden, the carnal mind sees prophecy as “history,” and—by his definition—that means “uninspired:”

*. . . The carnal mind says that prophecy—here's how prophecy comes, here's what the carnal mind will tell you how prophecy comes. It's man's thoughts. Just thoughts. A man just sat down, thought it, God dropped the thought and—puff—that must be God, I'll write it down. . . No, we don't need dreams or visions. . . I already told you that prophecy is the dream and the vision.*

Did Jesus ever speak plainly (not parabolically) in his preaching? He certainly did. Often more plainly than his hearers liked.

One of the plainest, most gracious 152 words ever uttered is found in a speech Jesus made to the multitudes in what is known as “The Sermon on the Mount.” In that sermon, Jesus said some very plain things. For example:

*Blessed [are] the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

And

*Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (Matt 5:1-11)*

In fact, Matthew, chapter five, contains plain teaching after plain teaching:

*Give your alms in secret.*

*Pray in secret.*

*Pray intelligently, not using vain repetitions.*

*If you can't forgive others, God can't forgive you.*

*Don't lay up treasures on earth, but in heaven because where your treasure is, your heart will be.*

*A man can't serve two masters.*

*Don't worry excessively about providing for yourself because God will take care of you, like he does the birds.*

*Worry won't add anything to your life.*

The list continues in chapter six. There are no secret, deep, mystical, coded messages here—simply the plain-stated wisdom of God.

And what of the Old Testament? Which of the Ten Commandments need a lot of interpretation? What interpretation do you need for a command to honor your parents, or to refrain from stealing and adultery?

Weeden is dead wrong when he suggests that the Bible requires some sophisticated method of ferreting out messages hidden behind the plain words of scripture. This wrong-headed idea has plagued the Church for two millennia. It gives rise to Christian Mysticism and it fuels the desire of immature and gullible people to be insiders to secret, deep things of God. It is why we have people writing books about codes which supposedly decipher Bible prophecy.

This approach to scripture is as old as time. It has its derivation in the philosophy of Plato who suggested that mankind can only understand spiritual matters as shadows cast on the wall of a cave. At various times during the history of the Church of Christ, self-appointed “prophets” have arisen to declare that interpreting scripture is like deciphering the shadows on the cave wall. They have devised various systems for such interpretation. Their attempts have clouded, not clarified, the scriptures.

It is true that the carnal mind cannot grasp the glory of God and His graciousness in making salvation possible. It is true that man must be born again in order to see the Kingdom of God. It is true that God's ways are higher than man's ways and that man's wisdom is foolishness to God. But none of this supposes that the revelation of God is always in parable and never in plain speech.

## Paul and the “Super-Apostles”

Weeden continually puts down the rest of Christendom. He elevates his opinions over those of all the devout, sincere, Christian saints who have reached a high degree of consensus on Christian doctrine over the past two millennia. I always wonder how a person walks out of a Utah canyon or a Chicago suburb and thinks that everyone who ever went before him totally misses the Christian message. It is arrogant in the extreme to think that our own ability to interpret scripture surpasses the combined devotion and wisdom of the Body of Christ.

But such arrogance is not new to the Church. In the eleventh chapter of II Corinthians, the apostle Paul talks about the “super apostles” who were introducing complexity to the simplicity of the Gospel message:

*II Cor 11:3—I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his **subtilty**, [craftiness--false wisdom] so your minds should be corrupted from the **simplicity** [mental honesty; free from pretence and hypocrisy; not self seeking] that is in Christ.*

4—For if he that cometh preacheth **another Jesus**<sup>(2)</sup> whom we have not preached, or [if] ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or **another gospel**<sup>(3)</sup>, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with [him].

The attempt to allegorize the scripture is historic, wrong and the gateway to much error, fueling the rise of cult after cult after cult. The truth is that God chose to speak to man and he spoke to him in language man could understand. After two thousand years the orthodox Body of Christ defends what God has revealed to man in scripture. To be sure, there are areas of significant disagreement with the Church, but on the important revelations of God there is astounding general agreement. The Church of God agrees doctrinally about the Nature of God, the nature of man, the nature of sin, and God's remedy for sin. The Gospel has remained intact, just as Jesus said it would:

*I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18)*

The cults always seem to think Jesus was wrong and the Church of Christ has not survived intact.

The super-spiritual—"super-apostles"—are unashamed to pit their understanding against the healthy Body of Christ. Men and women like Weeden scorn the Body of Christ, they fail to "see" (discern) the body (I Cor 11:29-30) and in that failure they cut themselves off from fellowship with healthy Christianity and do themselves an infinity of harm.

In the same I Corinthian passage, where Paul identifies these super-apostles, he tells us that those who listen to the false prophets:

*"Suffer fools gladly," because they are [they consider themselves] wise [actually "intelligent" or "smart."]*

In the long run, these super-apostles wind up being too smart for the Body of Christ!

## Error II. Dreams are the primary way God speaks to people.

Weeden states:

*"A dream is truly seeing in the spirit inspired by the Holy Ghost and not by our own spirits! This is how a real spoken word from God comes to a prophet or to a believer. It is not just another way God speaks to his people it is **the way**." (from web page reaveal2)*

Again:

*"God speaks to people by dream and vision; and by the foolishness of preaching, which can only come through a man that has been sent by God in a dream or vision..."(wayofaneagle.org)*

Finally:

*God does not speak by the thoughts in your mind....A true word from God comes in the Spirit by dream and vision. All the Prophets operated this way. The inspiration of God is a dream and vision that comes to the prophet from God in the Spirit. (wayofaneagle.org)*

## My Perspective

I have sort of a unique position as a commentator on the cults. I am one of the few nationally known "cult-busters" who is a Pentecostal. By definition, that means I believe that God *does* speak to us through dreams and visions. However, when Weeden suggests that dreams and visions are the *primary* way God speaks to people or, worse, *the only way*, he puts himself way outside of the entire Evangelical Church. To my knowledge, no credible Evangelical or Pentecostal minister takes such a position.

## Wrong

Suggesting that doctrine is revealed primarily in a dream or vision is indefensible.

God certainly spoke through dreams and visions to the Old Testament Prophets and the New Testament Apostles. Obviously much of the Bible came to us that way. Weeden teaches that God *only* speaks through

dreams and visions. This is pointedly false. Most of the Bible—the Word of God—did not come as a dream or vision. Much of the Bible is history. In the New Testament, the Gospels were written as recollections of actual events observed by the writers of the Gospels or by people who wrote down what the eyewitnesses told them. They are *inspired Words of God!* They are Scripture. But the writers of the Gospels did not record a vision, they recorded what they or the Apostles saw with their own, natural eyes:

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;*

*...That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you..(I John 1:1-3)*

And these verses back that up:

Luke 1:2 *Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;*

2Pe 1:16 *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

And what about the Epistles? Paul wrote *inspired, God-Breathed* Scripture. But he was not (with one notable exception in II Corinthians 12:2-4) recording dreams or visions. (And it is worth noting that he referred to a vision in that passage, but he said that what was seen could not be recounted because he had heard “. . . unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”) No, Paul’s writings are not “visions written down”—not at all. His written scripture was penned to real people about real events giving them real wisdom—wisdom inspired by God and delivered in plain speech.

Certainly, scripture was given through prophets who were moved by the Holy Spirit:

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost. (II Peter 1:21)*

Likewise, men of God were moved upon by God in dreams and visions. But Weeden ridicules the idea that men of God wrote “as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” in their minds—*outside* of a dream, vision, or (as he sometimes says “trance”). The thought that God could cause the Apostle Paul—while he was fully awake—to recite revelation is unthinkable to Weeden. For Weeden that becomes: “A man just sat down, thought it, God dropped the thought and—puff—that must be God, I’ll write it down”.

The Apostle Peter, however, liked the idea that Paul penned scripture out of his wise letters written to specific people and groups. We call that wise counsel “scripture” today—and so did the Apostle Peter in II Pet 3:15-16.

When evaluating Weeden’s teachings, we need to remember that the New Testament is full of warnings about listening to people who bring ideas that are new and that are not accepted by the broader church. In fact, still heeding Peter’s counsel in context, we need to remain vigilant against false prophets who bring radically odd interpretations to scripture:

*For the prophecy came not in old time [Old Testament times] by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.*

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (I Pet 1:21-2:1)*

**Dreams, Visions, and Prophecies—in modern times—are subordinate to the clear teachings of the Bible**

I have watched the development of cults for thirty years. Especially within my special area of expertise: the study of the errors of Mormonism. There are *hundreds* of different Mormon Churches in existence today. That is because Mormonism is based on the proposition that truth comes primarily through a modern prophet receiving dreams and visions. So every imaginative Mormon who wants to start his own church just has to get a vision and request that people search their hearts to see how they feel about it.

Prophecy, of course must be judged, by the Bible—the rule of faith and doctrine. The Bible contains the full revelation of God’s will for man. As the writer of the Book of Jude said:

*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort [you] that ye should earnestly contend for **the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.***

*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 3-4)*

Christianity has been fully, finally, and completely revealed.

There is no need for anything “new” to be discovered. The Gospel, like scripture, needs no additions.

*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners **spake in time past** unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (Hebrews 1:1-2)*

Concentrating on dreams and visions leads us to focus on the mind of man, rather than the Word of God.

Weeden says the Christian Churches are carnal and that they need his system so they can become spiritual. But the very opposite is true. His concentration on dreams and visions has led him to ridiculous lengths as evident in the promo of one of his audio tapes offered on Weeden’s web site called, “As A Thief in the Night.” The promo says:

***Have you ever dreamed any of these...***

- You were having sex with a stranger.*
- Your teeth fell out.*
- A snake or serpent bit you.*
- A stranger was chasing you.*
- You were in a mall or hotel.*
- You were in a hospital or unfamiliar house.*
- You were flying in the air.*
- You lost your car, it was stolen or wrecked.*
- A crocodile was chasing you.*
- You were unprepared for an exam.*
- You were naked in public.*
- You were surrounded by dogs.*
- Someone shot you with a gun.*
- You were in a pit.*

***God May be Talking to You!***

Such nonsense is clearly a departure from mature Christian faith and doctrine. It turns Bible interpretation into divination.

Looking for dreams and visions today as a primary means of hearing from God is not only foolish, it turns the clock back. Obviously in early Old Testament times—when the Word of God was unavailable in printed form—it was *necessary* for God to speak through dreams and visions to prophets and leaders. But, now, one can spend a lifetime studying the Bible and learning about the fullness of the Love of God for mankind and what He expects of man in return for that love. This is exactly what is meant in Hebrews, chapter one:

*1 ¶ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners **spake in time past** unto the fathers by the prophets,  
2 **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;***

We have not only the recorded teachings of Jesus Himself (the Gospels), but we have books explaining His teaching (Epistles). We don’t need more visions, we need to understand the Word of God which has been delivered to us in the Bible.

*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.*

*Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (II Pet. 1:3-4)*

## Dangerous

Any modern dream or vision must be vigorously judged against the teachings of the Bible by mature Christians.

*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1)*

First Corinthians 14:29 tells us that if a prophet speaks to the church, two or three should judge what he is saying. But when the “prophet” develops a new, special way of interpreting the Bible that he alone defines, he effectively prevents anyone from judging his teaching. The cults always do this by introducing new scripture or by teaching that *only they* can accurately interpret scripture—which is what Weeden does. Those who do not receive him and his teachings are “carnal-minded.”

I believe this elite claim Weeden makes to special inside understanding is what the Apostle Paul warns us about in the Book of Colossians:

*Col. 2:18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.*

Weeden says all scripture is dreams and visions written down:

*When you are reading the scripture you are reading prophecy. It is the dream or the vision written. It is not physical history.*

That is foolishness on the face of it. The Old Testament is divided into sections: The Law, the History, and the Prophets. The twelve books of history are those beginning with Joshua and ending with Esther. These books tell of God’s literal dealings with mankind—right here on the earth. From the way he dealt with the Israelites we learn much about the nature of God. Psalm 103:7 says [God] made known his *ways* unto Moses, his *acts* unto the children of Israel.” And these dealings are an example for us to understand our own relationship with God:

*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (I Cor. 10:11)*

## Who Interprets?

In Weeden’s world God speaks to us primarily by dream and vision. But how are we to go about interpreting the meanings of the dreams and visions?

Weeden answers by saying we interpret them “by the Bible.” “Let scripture interpret scripture.” That sounds good, but it is not what happens in the Weeden system. No, in his system we are taught to take the images of the dream or vision (or the words of scripture for that matter) and compare them to what Weeden *says* those images mean. And he has given us the tool to do that—the A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool.

## Error III. The A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool

At this writing, if you are willing to register online at Weeden’s web site, you can access his “A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool.” ([reveal2.org](http://reveal2.org))

Here you will be able to look up words and their decoded meanings (although at this writing you can only

look up words starting with the letters A-E). So, if you have an image of, say, *binoculars* in your dream, you will be told that it signifies “seeing afar off, faith, prophecy, spiritual sight/seer.” Or, if you see an image of an *alligator*, it represents “the king of all the children of pride.” A *bomb* represents the “effectiveness of a prophetic word.”

If you see *your breasts enormous*, it means you have “found favor in the Lord’s sight.” A *bullet* equals “effectiveness of word.”

All of these meanings can be assigned not only to images in dreams, but to words used elsewhere in Scripture.

## How He Got There

Weeden validates his system by declaring he is specially anointed of God to bring this new revelation:

*I was in a Bible study one night. We had just taught on the Word of the Lord as light and in him dwelleth no darkness at all. We began to hold hands and pray. We began to meditate upon the Word of the Lord. And I was caught up unto the heavens. And in the heavens I stood in the Garden of Gethsemane and I saw Jesus Christ. . . . You got preachers calling scriptural interpretation and dreams and visions a cult. And I want you to ask these preachers that are saying these things. “Have you seen Jesus?” “No.” Have you been to heaven?” “No.” “Maybe you’d better meet someone who’s been there.*

Further:

*This is not something you wanna play with. This is fire in my bones. This is the word of God purifying me. This is hell being destroyed. This is the salvation that the prophets diligently searched for. This is powerful. This is life. This is heaven. This is the third heaven manifest to you in a little hundred-and-fifty-five pound man called Jeff!*

Weeden talks about how God showed this to him. He says he began to see that:

*When studying the Bible, you must first understand that the Bible is a parable, and it needs and interpretation. The scripture uses words like is, is as, as is, is like, shall be like, shall be as, etc. to show you the meaning of the parables in scripture. These words are equals (=) to.*

So Weeden began to see that if he looked a word up in a concordance and studied all its usage he could determine the symbolic meaning of that word wherever it was used in scripture or wherever it appears in a dream, regardless of its obvious meaning!

## An Example

The night I attended a Weeden meeting, he referred to the fourth chapter of John where Jesus meets the woman at the well. John 4: 3 tells us that Jesus “...left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.” The very next verse says, “And he must needs go through Samaria.”

Now, the meaning of this passage is clear. Jesus is traveling from Judaea to Galilee. He is going to pass through the city of Samaria. In fact he *does exactly that*, and meets the woman at the well and has a striking conversation with her.

But Weeden focuses in on the phrase, “...he must needs go through Samaria.” Then he asks the question, “What *is* Samaria?”<sup>(5)</sup> He is working from the assumption that there is a hidden meaning in the passage.

Of course, the obvious answer to that is that Samaria is a town (also a region). But Weeden sees deeper significance to the statement. He had us turn to Micah 1:5, where we read (in the middle of the verse) “What [is] the transgression of Jacob? [is it] not Samaria?” So somehow Jesus is going through “the transgression of Jacob.” I don’t remember now what all Weeden thought that meant. I was astounded by this misguided muddiness and astonished at its smiling acceptance by those in the class.

## Let the Word Interpret the Word

Some of Weeden’s favorite expressions are:

*“Let the Word interpret the Word.” Or “let scripture interpret scripture.”*

*“The scripture is of no private interpretation.”*

*“The Bible is a parable.”*

*“The scriptures are prophecy written.”*

“Let the Word interpret the Word.”

This is good advice. The phrase is almost interchangeable with “The scripture is of no private interpretation.” But Weeden misunderstands both phrases.

Letting the Word interpret the Word actually means that you can’t assign meanings to words or concepts in the Bible that are radically different from the way the words or concepts are used in other parts of the Bible.

Let me give you an example. The King James Bible uses the words “adultery,” “adulterous,” “adulterer,” and “adulteress” 48 times. We know that the word stands for the concept of *sexual relations between two people who are not married to each other (but at least one of them is married to somebody else)*. Two unmarried people commit *fornication*, but not adultery. However, I am working on another cult (The so-called “Christian Polygamy” error. At least one of the men important in this movement has redefined the term adultery to mean the sin a man *commits “if he takes to wife a woman who is married to a godly man.”* He is not guilty of adultery if he takes a *virgin* as a second wife (even though he is married and having sex with someone besides his wife). He wouldn’t commit adultery if he took a second or third wife who was currently married to an *ungodly man*.

So, in my example, the polygamist is guilty of not letting the word interpret the word. Because the word “adultery” has a clear biblical meaning, and he has redefined it.

Weeden tortures the phrase “Let the Word interpret the Word.” He is convinced that all scripture is prophecy and needs interpreted. So every word of scripture has a “spiritual” meaning. But you can’t arrive at that meaning by using your “carnal” mind. You need Jeff Weeden to tell you what words mean. And if you do not agree with him then you do not believe in the principle of letting the Word interpret the Word.

*That is the plain and simple foundation of Weeden’s entire philosophy.*

“The scripture is of no private interpretation.”

Weeden refers to II Peter 1:20:

*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

Unfortunately, Weeden thinks *this* refers to his practice of interpreting the coded Bible words, and then bringing that meaning to a scripture to interpret it. So he is saying that the scriptural verse cannot be interpreted without reference to some other verse of scripture. To interpret it without reference to some other scripture would be “private interpretation.”

So, John’s statement (John 4:4 ) that Jesus “must go through Samaria,” *cannot* simply mean He has to walk through Samaria. *That* would be private interpretation. So Samaria *can’t* simply refer to a geographical area.<sup>(4)</sup>

But, of course, that is not at all what private interpretation means in II Peter 1:20. What is *really* being taught is that nobody has the right to come up with private interpretations of scripture—*The very thing Weeden does consistently!*

II Peter is warning us about false prophets who will come and bring private interpretations to scripture. In context, Peter is warning us about “cleverly invented stories” by false prophets who refuse to tow the doctrinal lines laid down by the Apostles who were eyewitnesses.

*So Weeden is himself guilty of privately interpreting scripture!* And his interpretations are so scandalous in the eyes of the Church of Christ that it calls him (according to his own testimony) a cultist. (Actually he says the Church calls him “an *evil* cultist.”)

The question Weeden needs to ask himself is the same question *all* the nonChristian cults need to ask: *Why is the Church of Christ against me?* Mormons should ask that question. Jehovah’s Witnesses should ask that question. And Jeff Weeden should ask that question. But he doesn’t. He routinely mocks the doctrines taught within Christendom. He thinks of the Church of Christ (which Jesus bought with his own blood) as “the congregation of the dead.”<sup>(1)</sup>

## Who decides?

How do we know that the word “bullet” equals “effectiveness of the word” as Weeden claims it does in his *A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool*? Bullet, of course, isn’t found in the Bible. How do we know that when a person has a dream of a bullet he hasn’t watched too much television? Or had a bad slice of pizza? Weeden teaches not only that all communication from God comes in dreams and visions, *but that all dreams are communications from God!* Every dream is significant and ought to be interpreted. Why? How does he know that? Where is *that* found in scripture?

But, even more important, how does he know what a bullet means? Or an alligator, or enormous breasts? This is not Bible study, it is silliness at best and necromancy at worst.

## Where Does it Lead?

Weeden is convinced that his “Tree of Life” (Scriptural Interpretation Tool) is given by God because the “carnal” ministers in the Church of Christ are misleading people and causing them to be marked for hell. Ministers who have not been caught up into heaven like Weeden says he has, are not only unqualified to preach, they are leading their listeners to hell:

*. . . the Bible tells you what a beast is and what the mark of the beast is. . . . A beast is a man in honor that understands not.*

These beasts are preachers who:

*preach and [have] never seen Jesus. No dream, no vision, never heard from God, **doesn’t believe the Bible is written in a parable***

And these preachers are:

*. . . causing you to get marked. . . . He will take Christ from you. You will have no dream, you’ll have no vision,*

This unnatural, wrong method of Bible interpretation has separated Weeden from the Church of Christ. I heard him voice that separation repeatedly in the meeting I attended. “If you teach like this, they will call you an evil cultist.” “They will say you are a heretic.”

Weeden cannot hide his contempt for the Body of Christ in his preaching. He teaches the basic cultic idea that he has come into new and special understandings of scripture. “This will blow you away!” one of my friends said to me during the lecture. “This will blow your mind!” He meant that Weeden’s teaching was revolutionary and exciting. Weeden believes the rest of the Church doesn’t understand his revelatory teachings because we are all carnal-minded.

Weeden is unashamedly boastful of this new method which has been entrusted to him.

*...I don’t know how many hundred years from now, maybe not a long time, maybe a short time, but one of these days, [people in the world are] gonna look at this A to Z [Scriptural Interpretation Tool] we’re putting together, which we are going to name “The Tree of Life.” And they’re going to look at this understanding and this wisdom that God has given to man and America might reject it—I don’t even know, but it might—fifteen hundred years from now—get translated back into Hebrew, or into Chinese, and they’re going to say My God! This is the word of God! This is the most awesome thing—the Bible, the Scriptures, plus The Tree of Life, the interpretation thereof*

*... and they are going to say “Oh, these men were the greatest men that ever lived on this planet. My God! The interpretation to prophecy. The word of wisdom. Understanding how to depart from evil. The interpretation that births Christ.”*

## A New Gospel

The process of interpreting the scripture is to look up the meanings of the words in the verse in the A to Z Scriptural Interpretation Tool

*Some of you have begun to learn how to discern the Word of God and you can open that thing up*

and go “My God! this is this and this is this and this is this and this is this. Wow! And if I need to know what this word means...Huh!...What does that mean? OK, this is this, this is this. Oh, you can do it fine.

Weeden concludes that, in reality, the process of “Working the Tree of Life”<sup>(6)</sup> is the process by which one is saved:

*The key for your salvation: believe the Bible, let it interpret itself, understand what it is saying and it will perform in your mind and in your heart it's the works of the spirit...Folks if you believe the Word of God and believe it interprets itself, and you start to work that for you...all you have to learn here to do is work it here...Just put the Word of God into your heart and watch it work folks and it will save you, the Word will save you because of yourselves you can do nothing...So who's the savior? The Word. Who renews the mind? The Word. Who works the dream or the vision?*

### Ignore Weeden at Your Own Risk

Weeden thinks you resist his new teaching at great peril. In a sermon entitled “The Tree of Life,” Weeden says God is angry at people who hear Weeden’s message and don’t practice it:

*I have been mulling in my mind, Why God, Why we can't get folks to be faithful to come to hear this message. And the Lord's angry. He's angry at the folks that have heard, I'll just tell you where the wood lies. Which is man cut down. He's angry at the response He's had to the table he's prepared that He's sent to his servants—his ministers...*

*...And you sit here today with the odds against you to have ever heard this.*

*...the word of God has come to us and gave us the tree of life and interpreted the scriptures. How shall we escape damnation?*

*And I want to say another thing to the church here. Yes, we have showed you the kindness of God. Yes, we've showed love of God. Yes we've showed you the patience of God, the long-suffering of God, the forgiveness of God, but never forget for a minute that your soul can be damned and scattered and destroyed totally and not remembered, and you can burn in the lake of fire which burneth forever and ever if you neglect this salvation.*

*This is not something you wanna play with. This is fire in my bones. This is the word of God purifying me. This is hell being destroyed. This is the salvation that the prophets diligently searched for. This powerful. This is life. This is heaven. This is the third heaven manifest to you in a little hundred-and-fifty-five pound man called Jeff!*

End