

DREAD DOMAIN

A CLERIC ARCHETYPE



WRITTEN BY BEN WORLEY

DREAD DOMAIN

Gods inspire wisdom and strength in a myriad of ways. Amongst these ways is the wisdom that comes with confronting the fearful truths of the universe. By embracing the lessons of the more terrifying and cruel gods of the Faerun, these clerics find inner strength, insight, and the peace of mind that can only come from understanding one's self. Cyric, Jergal, Talos, and Loviatar are some of the deities worshipped whose fearful and dangerous natures embody the lessons Clerics of this domain wish to impart.

CHARACTER CREATION

DREAD DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level Spells

1st	Cause Fear, Tasha's Hideous Laughter
3rd	Crown of Madness, Darkness
5th	Enemies Abound, Fear
7th	Evard's Black Tentacles, Phantasmal Killer
9th	Synaptic Static, Dream

BLESSING OF FEAR

At Level 1, you gain proficiency in Intimidation and Insight, if you don't already have it. You also gain the cantrip *Vicious Mockery*.

CHANNEL DIVINITY: MIND SHATTER

Starting at 2nd Level, you can use your Channel Divinity to expose others to the dreadful truths of the universe, weakening their will.

When taking an action against which a creature must make a Wisdom Saving Throw, you present your holy symbol. All targets of your action receive disadvantage on the Wisdom Saving Throws immediately caused by the spell. This does not apply to ongoing effects.

DEEP INSIGHT

At 6th Level, you can look into the souls of others and turn their fears against them.

As an action, choose one creature you can see within 30 feet of you. That creature must make a Wisdom saving throw. If it fails, you learn one fear it has. For the next minute, Charisma (Intimidation) checks against this creature that invoke this fear have advantage. This may be done once per short rest.

POTENT SPELLCASTING

Starting at 8th level, you add your Wisdom modifier to the damage you deal with any cleric cantrip.

UNBREAKABLE MIND

At 17th level, your mastery of your own fears has sharpened your mind against all dangers. You have advantage on all Wisdom saving throws.

GAMEPLAY

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

Dread Domain Clerics are spiritually devout people who find strength from acknowledging their frail and ultimately small place in the universe. This may take any number of forms. From a cruel, assertive leader that feels they have transcended weakness to an affable and carefree person who has made peace with the primal fear nothing matters, all is possible. The first example may easily become a tyrannical villain, while the latter simply goes through life with a happiness belying an inner strength. There are many ways to play a Dread Domain Cleric, with the only commonality being the strength they draw from understanding fear.

MECHANICAL CONCEPTS

Dread Domain Clerics function primarily by taking the fears they have mastered and inflicting them on those that have not yet gained this insight. Their spells and abilities are oriented around controlling or limiting feeble-minded creatures. As a Dread Domain Cleric grows in power, they gain more ways to exploit the fears and weaknesses of opponents. Additionally, Dread Domain Clerics are given a boon to roleplaying situations in the form of Intimidation and Insight bonuses that help them navigate social situations. Fear can be as precise as it can be overwhelming.



UNLEASH TRUE TERROR

Fear can be many things. To some, it is the greatest of teachers, guiding us to safety. To others, it is the greatest weapon, breaking the spirits of the lesser. It can be wisdom itself. It can be the source of all weakness.

With this Cleric subclass, you can channel this primal emotion as you see fit. Rend the spirits of your foes and steel your heart against folly. Defend your allies and incapacitate your enemies. For while fear may be many things, it is, above all else, yours to wield.

Cover & Inner Art: [Dani Kruse](#)

This subclass requires Xanathar's Guide to Everything to use in its entirety.

CREDITS

Subclass Design: Ben Worley ([@MarcianTobay](#))

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