

## New Year's Message

### Genesis 8

Preached three variations of this sermon 2012, 2014. This document combines aspects from all three sermons as they each differed slightly. Three different titles:

- Don't jump out there too soon.
- An Easier New Year
- Spiritual Decision Making – The Example of Noah

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

- Eph 6:17 talks about the armor of God and describes the word of God as the sword of the Spirit.
- You can't make spiritual decisions without a clear understanding of the Word.
- Function of the Word is to separate and divide soulish part from the spiritual realm. There is a difference.
- Until you understand that difference through the Word, you will always make decisions based upon your flesh, your emotions, logic, and how you feel. Spiritual decisions have little to do with the characteristics of the soul.
- Must understand the source and motivation for the action to determine the difference.

Gen 8 – Noah leaving the ark.....an example in spiritual decision making.

It was a rough year for Noah. Lost his home, lost some folk that were around him, and went through a rough season where there were a lot of rainy days. Water all around and riding the waves for 150 days...that's a long time. But there are 365 days in the year so even though he had a 40 day period of just straight rain and trouble, and 150 days of rough waters, he still had more good days than bad days which means when you go through a rough time, if the L-rd is with you you'll have more good days than bad. Not saying Mr. Christian, Ms Christian that you won't have some mighty bad times and rough seas to travel, being saved don't mean you'll have smooth sailing every day, doesn't mean you won't go through some things, but it does mean in the end, you'll have more good days than bad and He'll even bring you through your bad season to a better season. It really does get better.

Bible says he was 600 when he got in the ark (Gen 7:6) and in Gen 8:13 he was 601 when it ended. He had been going through for a whole year. But he was still standing and God didn't forget him. Grace.

- Important to know that God will remember to bring you through so don't worry.
- Important to know that when you have a bad year that God will prepare an ark and way of escape for you to make it through. If you are here today, give him praise and rejoice because you've made it through another year. Okay, not everybody made it through this year.
  - Not everybody he knew last year when he was 600, made it through into 601. Troubled water can wash away some stuff in our lives. Noah lost some stuff in that last year, but it didn't keep him from God's best; plan was still in effect; he wasn't disqualified for a greater blessing...and he's still moving and expecting a bright new year. Your change is here.
- Judgment – Noah is in a place or season of judgment; but in the ark, he is able to rise above the earth. In fact, it is in the water, the trouble, the persecution, that allows him to be lifted up. But being in the ark is the place to be when trouble comes (count it all joy when you go through various trial, when all sorts of trouble ...I will praise you in the storm). Oh, in this place of judgment if you are riding it out with God, if Jesus is in your boat, then you should be able to ride this out. When trouble comes you won't sink beneath the waves, but you can swag when you surf. I'm about to get my swag on.
- Noah is in a tight spot, and he's ready for something better, ready for a break through, ready to bust out of his current situation and start over, and start fresh. Trying to help you know how to start out your new year.
- What Noah relied on last year, he was ready to leave to pursue something better in his new year.
  - What brought me through last year, what helped me to survive and kept me afloat last year, God says you will be stepping out of that and stepping into something better this year. But if you never step out from last year, you won't do much better this year.

It came to pass. There's an expiration date on your season of troubled waters. God still has power over your situation. Commanded the wind and waves.

Verse 3 -4: Waters started to decrease instead of increase. Before the ark landed, the trouble that was surrounding him that he faced and had to deal with before started to decline after 150 days.

- Didn't happen overnight, didn't happen in a day, but gradually over time things started to get settled.
- Rested on the day which later would be around the same time Israel crosses the Red Sea, which means around the same day Jesus rises from the grave. Which means when the ark rested, he was about to leave transition and enter revival....we don't have far to go, don't have much longer to wait...this rocky journey is about to smooth out.
- Not saying Mr. Christian, Ms. Christian that you won't have some mighty bad times and rough seas to travel, being saved don't mean you'll have smooth sailing every day, doesn't mean you won't go through some things, but it does mean in the end there's an expiration date on your season of troubled waters. God still has power over your situation.

Opens a window, but the door is still closed. You don't need to open your door just yet, you better just peek out your window first.

Sent out a raven and a dove. The purpose was to get intelligence on the situation. Before he jumps out there, he is going to find out some intelligence about the situation. You need to get some Intel before you jump out there. Don't just jump out there because it feels good, seems right, looks okay, or somebody else told you to, or because you just tired of being in your ark....better get some intelligence before you make a decision in 2012.

- Stop making decisions based upon how you feel.
  - He that believes does not make haste.
- Be careful making hasty decisions in 2012. The devil will always present to you some quick options to get you to make a bad decision, which will always turn out bad and put you in a big mess. Anybody ever make some bad decisions that felt good, looked good, sounded good, and you jumped out there and it might have been good for a little bit....but you suddenly found yourself in a big mess. Before you bust a move....make sure you wait and ask God.
  - Adam and Eve, should have waited and asked God; Abraham/Sarah, Moses.

Send out a raven. Ravens are one of the most intelligent creatures in the animal kingdom. They will manipulate other animals to get food. They are scavengers meaning they eat dead stuff.

- Flies around, goes out and comes back, probably feeding on dead stuff but never coming back with news that would satisfy Noah. Didn't bring back any comfort or satisfaction for real.
- Raven representing darkness and human wisdom and intellect. Human wisdom and knowledge alone, worldly knowledge alone, what your friends and experts say alone.....will not give you all the information you need to make a major decision. It will never satisfy you fully.
- You can have all the degrees you want...that doesn't mean you gonna make right decisions in life. Smart people still get divorced, street smart people still go to jail, when making major decisions you need more than just worldly knowledge and what you think.
- Oh, just because you are saved...doesn't mean you will make Godly and spiritual decisions. Noah was just saved from the flood, but that didn't guarantee that his next decisions would be led by the Spirit. Saved people still get divorced, Christians still go to jail, and believers can still say mean things and decide to do mean things even after God has just delivered them. Some of the dumbest decisions I've made in life were after I got saved.
- If just sending out the raven was enough, then he wouldn't have had to send out the dove. Your raven will never satisfy you enough or give you enough information in order to make the right decisions in life.

Just using the raven didn't work for Noah so he sends out a dove.

- Dove is a symbol of love and peace. Also symbolic of the Holy Ghost. Send it out the first time, but the dove couldn't find a good place to land.

- Verse 9, found no rest in the place so it returned to the Ark and Noah reached out and pulled her in. Unlike the raven, the dove comes back even though the dove didn't have good news. Even though the news wasn't good, Noah stretches out and receives the dove.
  - Oh, you missed it. God may give you an answer that you don't want to hear, you might not like it, but you need to pull it in because it's from God. Too many times we don't like God's timing. We want it right now, but God says wait. It ain't time yet, you ain't ready to handle what's out there yet. Instead of complaining about it, you should be rejoicing because at least the dove returned with an answer, while your raven is still running around out there unconcerned about you.
  - Waited until next Sunday, sent the dove out again, and the dove came back with an olive leaf. The first week might not have been your week...but your week is coming. A sign of peace, a sign of new growth, a sign that what was dead was now alive again. Something about this story reminds me of my savior. New hope.
  - Waited another week, sent the dove out again, but this time, the dove doesn't come back because the dove found a peaceful place where there was rest for the soul. Even though he couldn't see the dove anymore, he knew that the dove had given him the answer he was looking for. It took a little while, but he got the answer he was looking for...it was almost time to go.

Verse 13 – in the first month, the first day of the month, Noah removed the covering from the ark because it was almost time to bust loose. Didn't see the dove because the dove had gone on ahead in this new place....boy this story sure sounds like my Jesus. Another comparison....when the Children of Israel were in the wilderness, they moved when the pillar of cloud/fire moved again representing the Holy Spirit.

- The face of the ground was dry. Oh, you missed it again. If Noah had gotten out of the ark when the raven went out, it would have been a bad move; a disaster.
- If he had decided to leave the ark when he sent the dove out the first time, it would have been a bad move, tough going, muddy, sloppy, messy situation, gonna have to get dirty, not going to be as easy if you had just waited for the dove.
  - Somebody knows something about getting in over your head and drowning in stuff, drowning in debt, sorrow, tears.
  - Be careful making hasty decisions in 2012. The devil will always present to you some quick options to get you to make a bad decision that will always turn out bad and put you in a big mess. Anybody ever make some bad decisions that felt good, looked good, sounded good, and you jumped out there and it might have been good for a little bit...but you suddenly found yourself in a big mess. Before you bust a move....make sure you wait and ask God.

Behold, means to look hard at something, need to seriously consider what's happening here. When you act upon the information given to you by the dove, you'll make the right call every time.



Lesson from all of this, in 2012 don't worry about resolutions, you need to get a good dove that will help you make good decisions, that will comfort you when you don't get the answer you were looking for, come back to you where you are, when you are ready to leave.

I don't have a dove, but Jesus did leave us with the Holy Ghost. Every decision we make in 2012 should be led and guided by the Holy Ghost. Don't make a major move without the Holy Ghost.

You need a spiritual GPS, so when you start to go off in the flesh, when you start to rely on your own understanding, and facts, and feelings, and your emotions....you need a spiritual GPS to help you recalculate your route so you can make the proper correction to get back on track....or else you'll go off.

- In 2012, if you want to stay out of some messy situations, rely on the Holy Ghost.
- In 2012, before you step out there, rely on the Holy Ghost...see what God has to say about the situation.
- In 2012, don't move on emotion, don't make a major decision only on what you think, what does the Holy Spirit say.
- In 2012, if you don't get confirmation of peace in your spirit, don't you move.
- In 2012, if you don't have peace about a decision, stay in your ark, stay where you are a while longer.
  - The blessings of the L-rd maketh one rich, and addeth no sorrow.
  - Make sure you use the right "peace" for the job.
- In 2012, understand that where you are today, God intends it to be temporary; a breakthrough is designed for you and expected and planned for your future, just don't move too fast. Rely on God. Truth be told, every decision I've made has not always been led by the Holy Spirit, not every decision has been made for the glory of God. Some decisions I made were because I was tired of the ark, impatient for something better, based upon how I felt, or based upon worldly wisdom....i.e., what I knew, what my friends told me, etc.
- Gonna be different in 2012. Follow the Holy Spirit and things will go a lot easier.
- True sign that the decision made and the actions taken are spiritual...lines up with the Word, and produces the fruit of the Spirit which is love, and you have peace. No peace.....don't move.
- In 2014, understand that where you are today, God intends it to be temporary; a breakthrough is designed for you and expected and planned for your future, just don't move too fast. Rely on God. Truth be told, every decision I've made has not always been led by the Holy Spirit, not every decision has been made for the glory of God. Some decisions I made were because I was tired of the ark, impatient for something better, based upon how I felt, or based upon worldly wisdom....i.e., what I knew, what my friends told me, etc.

Invitation



Before you can have the Holy Spirit, you have to be in the ark. This means you have to trust God for your salvation. Trust God to save you from the judgment that is coming. God is the same, there's nothing new under the sun, so what happened to Noah, is a foreshadow of what God is about to do next. You need to be saved.

#### Communion

Sends the dove out three times. Third time he doesn't come back, but he paves the way for a new life and new hope for Noah, and he comes out of the ark. Jesus came the first time so we would receive him. He brings us peace through this communion and the promise of a new life both down here and in heaven. For while we don't see him, we have the peace he leaves us through his Holy Spirit.