



A Spiritual Encouragement Message

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The Wise Man

By Andrew Lemus

The foolish man built his house upon the sand. When the storms came, the waters rose, and the ground that the house was built on washed away along with the home that was on it. The other man, a wise man, dug deep down into the ground through the sand until he hit the rock. He then laid his foundation upon the rock and built his house on it. When the rains came and the water rose, the rock and the man's foundation stood steadfast, unmoved, and other than getting a little wet, remained unchanged. I can only imagine how alarming and concerning it was for the wise man as he witnessed the sand, the house, and the foolish man inside it washed away by the storm: to see his neighbor perish. Perhaps he felt a bit of anxiety and worry that he might face the same fate as the storm, wind, and water's raged. He might have even hunkered down, reminded himself of the stability that he had, and prayed out to God for comfort due to the instability of the world he found himself in. In the end though, the wise man walked out of his home unharmed, protected, and steadfast due to the precious rock he built his house on.

Brothers and sisters, we live in an unstable world. Regardless of the generation you find yourself in, instability is awaiting you. This world is dark, sin is prevalent, and the destruction that comes as a result is a moment away. Throughout the course of our lives, we find ourselves dealing with misinformation, false teachings, disease, poverty, pandemics, famine, wars, natural disasters, political unrest, death, violence, and so many other challenges. We shouldn't be asking ourselves if the storm will come and if the waters will rise but rather when will it come and are we prepared to endure it?

The difference between the wise man and foolish man is really simple, but like most simple Biblical truths they include a total change in mindset, priorities, and worldview. The difference between the wise man and foolish man is this, one heard the word of God and did what it said, and the other merely heard the word. The wise man endured the storm and the foolish man perished.

The foolish man's house crashed down when the storm and trials came because he had no root or foundation of obedience to hold him in place (Matthew 7:24, 26). The fool who built his house on the sand was like the man who looks in a mirror, walks away, and immediately forgets what he looks like (James 1:24). He is like the soil that hears the word of God but the tribulations, persecutions, the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches halts his obedience and chokes him out (Matthew 13:21-22). Do not be deceived, those who are merely hearers of the word and do not do what it says are those who are building their house upon the sand (James 1:22).

The wise man's house stood firm when the storms and trials came because he had the root and foundation of obedience to hold him in place (Matthew 7:24-25). He was like the one who looked in the mirror, the perfect law of liberty, and continually acts upon what he has seen (James 1:25). He is like the good soil, who hears the word, understands it, and obeys it (Matthew 13:23). Unlike the fool, the wise man doesn't

merely hear word but does what it says and as a result, perseveres through the storms of life (James 1:22).

So, have you built your house on the sand or on the rock? In other words, are you one that merely hears the word or one who hears and obeys it? Like it or not, the storm is here, the wind is blowing, and the waters are rising and it's time to test your faith. Are you finding yourself weathering the storm because of the foundation of obedience you have laid, or are you being tossed around, choked out, and swept away by the worries, challenges, and hardships in this world? This current storm has been blowing for almost a year, have we already witnessed some of those we counted among our number swept away by the challenges we have faced?

The Apostle John made this sobering statement to the first century church that was enduring challenges that hopefully we will never face. He wrote, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that none of them were of us" (1John 2:19). Sadly, as the apostle John points out, some among us have in fact built their house upon the sand and sadly, deny Jesus Christ when the storms of this world rage.

Let us shine bright as the storms rage around us. Let others see that we have in fact built our house on the rock, that we are those who hear and obey God, and that we can and will endure the storms of life. So that when the storm passes, the rainbow arches across the sky, and the sun shines on a land that has been ravaged by the trials, hardships, and challenges of this world, our house will still be standing firm. Let it be revealed to all that our houses have remained, unbeaten, and have persevered. Let us prepare ourselves to receive the rewards that come with faithfully obeying God's word. The wise man built his house upon the rock.

"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12