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## Preparing For The Storms Of Life

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We have been hearing and seeing of the recent storms which have come to the coastlines of the United States. In preparing for the natural storms, people were encouraged to get extra supplies ie; food, water, gas and do other things that would enable them to survive for a period of time, because when the storms come things would change and it might be necessary for them to evacuate or get completely out of the area.

As believers, how do we prepare for the storms of life? We are encouraged by God's word to prepare for the storms that may be coming our way, the word declares that the "storms will come to everyone". There are many people who have to deal with the storms of life but are unable to do so, they are unprepared, being unprepared can cause serious problems.

In the following scriptures, Jesus is speaking to the people explaining to them the storms that will come against them and how to prepare for them. These same stories are shared in Matthew 7 in the Sermon on the Mount, the people commented about the fullness of the teachings but Jesus was asking them why they were not doing what He said, they claimed Him as Lord, but were not doers of that word. The final outcome of the man who heard and did was different from the man who heard and did nothing. The hearer dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock, while the other hearer did not dig deep or lay a foundation, instead built on sand and when the flood came the outcome for each of them was different. One house stood, the other fell and was destroyed. We must not only be hearers of the word but be doers also. Becoming a doer of the word is a process of growth in our lives, we do not become doers of the word the instant that we hear the word, we make the decision to do it and may stumble a few times, but we will work it out in our lives. We know that \*the rock is actually Jesus Christ, but that rock is also the church. What brings revelation knowledge and a greater understanding of the word of God? When we begin to be doers of the word, we take a step and God takes a step and He begins to teach us and we take another step of faith and God takes another step, line upon line, precept upon precept. The person who is a doer of the word of God will have revelation knowledge working in him and when he is a doer of the word of God in relationship to what he hears, the storm will come but it will not shake him. However, if we are like the man who was not a hearer or doer of the word of God, who built his house without a foundation, did not dig deep, when the storm came it fell and great was the fall. We see the same storm coming to the entire body of Christ, one storm comes and will cause them to fall but another receiving the same type of storm, rises above the adversity and succeed to have His even with greater faith.

Luke 6:46-48 "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon \*a rock." KJV

Jesus is questioning Peter regarding who people were saying that Jesus was, some were saying that

He was different men or one of the prophets, but Peter answered that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God, Jesus responded that only God could have revealed that to him and continued to say that upon this rock His church would be built.

Today under the age of grace, we realize that the Holy Spirit reveals to us who Jesus is. The Holy Spirit is our teacher and revealer of truth, He shows us things to come. Without the revelation of the Holy Spirit revealing truth to us it will be challenging for us to build our faith upon the rock without revelation knowledge working in our lives, we must have revelation knowledge that the word of God is true and that He isn't a liar and once that He has spoke He brings things to pass, we must understand that Gods word is superior, God is not man that He should lie or that He should repent, has He not spoken He shall make it good. That comes by revelation of the word of God.

Matt 16:17-18 "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." KJV

Matt 16:18 "And I tell you, you are Peter [Greek, *Petros*—a large piece of rock], and on this rock [Greek, *petra*—a huge rock like Gibraltar] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (the powers of the infernal region) shall not overpower it [or be strong to its detriment or hold out against it]." AMP

Jesus was not saying that the church would be built on Peter, who was not the most stable person, but Petra the revelation knowledge of God is where the church would be built. The word of God is being taught in most of the churches today, but not all of the knowledge is revelation knowledge. This knowledge has to be taught by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. God is a good God and God wants the best for all believers to have His plan and purpose, this comes only by the revelation knowledge from the Holy Spirit.

Understanding about the storms of life that shall come to all, we learn that the definition of storms is a violent attack, assault or outbreak or disturbance. We all know what it is like to be assaulted from time to time in our walk of faith. There are many examples of believers who have endured the storms of life and came out unshaken.

We find in Matthew 13, Luke 8 basically the same teaching as what is in Mark 4, the parable of sowing the seed, the word of God, the types of ground that the word was sown on and how each who heard the word received and became doers of that word. Jesus had been teaching the people, although not many of the people understood what He had been saying, they were excited but had no endurance, no commitment or discipline. He then took his disciples aside and begin to teach them how the word works and gave them private teachings, expounded to them personally. Later that same day, He wanted to cross over to the other side of the sea of Galilee. What was the plan of God for Jesus and his disciples to do? it was to cross over. It was known that frequently storms could arise suddenly, causing the sea to become fierce.

Mark 4:35-41 "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. other liltle ships there arose a great storm of wind 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there \*arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" KJV

\*arose - unexpected hadn't counted on it, blindsided them, weren't prepared for it

On the other side there were many people in need of healing, help and deliverance. The man with the demons, woman with the issue of blood, Jarius' daughter who was about to die on the other side, there was a ministry to be done. However, anytime believers begin to do something for God there are always people whose lives will be touched and there will be opposition along the way, storms of life are going to come, persecution and misunderstanding, harsh words may come, divisions, differences, how we handle these storms will determine how we get to the other side. We cannot allow fear and doubt to enter into our lives even when something unexpected arises in our lives. Fear and doubt work together, they cannot be separated.

The disciples showed fear and doubt because of finding Jesus asleep, thinking that He did not care, Jesus arose and rebuked the wind, spoke the words "peace be still" it ceased and the sea became calm. Jesus had just finished teaching them how the seed worked but yet they were overcome with fear, they had not had time to implement the principles that He had taught. He asked them why they were so fearful and how do they not have any faith, where is it at? They were astonished asking among themselves, who is this man that even the wind obeys him? Gods plan for them was that they be able to stand up and speak to the storm. Our course and destiny are determined by what is coming out of our mouths.

Acts 27:20-22 "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. 21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. 22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." KJV

Paul said there was no hope, all hope had been taken away, because they had not paid attention to him in what he had told them earlier. But after hearing a word from the Lord, he was able to tell them to be of good cheer and there would no loss of life. In going through a storm in our lives we must hear a word from God and then our attitude helps us to be of good cheer, praising and thanking God. Can we easily grab hold when there seems to be no hope? In the midst of a storm we have a tendency to compromise what God has said and to start building our doctrine on circumstances or beliefs and forget what God has said. Circumstances are always changeable, Gods word never changes, it is stable. When we start building on circumstances then we have no solid foundation. Paul encouraged everyone to be of good cheer in the midst of the storm. Paul could say this boldly because of what he had heard regarding the circumstances and what came out of his mouth. When Paul received the word the circumstances of the storm worsened, but in the midst of the storm when it looked like all was lost, no hope, Paul's confession was that he believed what God had spoken to him.

The storm continued and the ship was lost, but all the men on board were spared and they stayed there until there was a more favorable time of year and were able to go on to Rome. The purpose that God had for Paul to go to Rome was the most important thing, not the seriousness of the storm that he encountered.

Your course is determined in the midst of the storm by what is coming out of your mouth. Keep your confession in the positive, do not say anything about the storm you are experiencing. When God gives a word there is always a reason, it is not to just make us feel good, He knows that we are going to need that word as a foundation to hang on to because there is trouble ahead. He gives us a word in season, so when the storm comes, we are prepared for it, we are believing the word so we are speaking the word and being a doer of it and the storm does not destroy us. God says that He will be

with us in trouble and deliver us out of it all. (Read Psalms 91)

We see from the book of Daniel, how Daniel and the three Hebrew children; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who were living in Babylon were treated, the storms that continually were in their lives, the persecutions, the threats of death, all the false accusations being made, their refusal to bow down to the king and worship the idols that had been placed before them, they remained faithful to God. There would be no compromise on their part, we will lose if we are making compromises in the storms of our lives.

Daniel had been put over everything in Babylon, people were jealous, he was preferred over all of them, he had an excellent spirit and was faithful to God, he refused to change any of his habits regarding prayer and would not compromise, he had favor with the king.

Daniel 6:4 "Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." KJV

The king was tricked into making decrees that could not be broken, by those wanting to get rid of Daniel. It was ordered that he be thrown into the lions' den, this was their way of getting rid of him, even though the king favored Daniel and was anxious about him, the king was relieved to see that indeed Daniel's god had saved him. Daniel did not give up or give in, in the midst of his storm. However, when Daniel was released those who meant harm to come to him were thrown into the lions' den, them and their families. The king ordered a decree that all men in his kingdom fear the God that Daniel served, declaring that he is the living God.

Daniel 6:16 "Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." KJV

Daniel 6:22-27 "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. 23 Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. 24 And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den. 25 Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 26 I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. 27 He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." KJV

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had been ordered on promise of death to honor the idol that had been set up by Nebuchadnezzar, in failing to do so, they were thrown into the fiery furnace. They had told the king that they would rather die than dishonor God, their confession was "even if they were not delivered, they would continue to serve their God". Those men who threw them into the furnace were destroyed and all the people saw the fourth person in the fire knowing that only three had been placed there. Their declaration or confession stayed firm in the midst of the storm that they encountered by what they believed, that God was able and would deliver them.

Daniel 1:6 "Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:" KJV

Daniel 3:16 "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. 19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and

the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. 20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. 26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. 27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. 28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God." KJV

The Hebrew children trusted in God and believed Him, they had made their declaration by the words that came out of their mouth, they determined their destiny and their purpose that God would deliver them. Nebuchadnezzar recognized what they had said, would be the final outcome.

God has supernatural deliverance for us in any storm that we are going through if we have trusted Him. Hearing encouraging words from others inspires us to keep going, Hebrews tells us that we are encompassed about with a large company looking over the banisters of heaven encouraging us to continue in our faith walk in the midst of our storm. Keep your faith, chose to prepare for the storm, trusting in God, having a good attitude, being cheerful full of joy. Jesus is at the right hand of the Father praying for us. It is God that restores and will not withhold any good thing from us.