

‘Be Wise as Serpents and Harmless as Doves’

Our church was hosting a small leadership meeting on behalf of another organization. One incoming minister, however, had just publicly endorsed homosexuality as an acceptable Christian lifestyle only a few days before.

I knew by the Holy Spirit that this individual would inadvertently compromise those in attendance at the event, including myself. It came to me like a short movie playing inside my spirit. I “watched” several photos being taken at the event and then being posted to social media giving the appearance of a false alliance. This would create guilt by association and I wasn’t willing to let that happen. And so I contacted the minister and explained my position.

I then respectfully asked this person not to attend the meeting because “I’m not willing to be compromised on this issue.” To my surprise the minister recanted most of their position and even took down their public endorsements of homosexuality. Although not fully resolved, it showed me this truth—*It is vital to be surrounded by right voices as deception is always speaking.*

Your Eyes Are Blessed to See

The prophet Jeremiah was vexed and frustrated in heart. He saw the condition of his people, how they had become *b-a-d to the bone*. They were wicked, sinful, and had traded their glorious God for an abundance of no-good idols. “The heavens were shocked at such a thing” because no nation had ever exchanged their gods for new ones (Jer. 2:11-12).

For 40 years, Jeremiah prophesied messages from the Lord to His people. He warned them over and over that they would lose their land and go into captivity if they didn’t turn back to

Him. Nobody listened because nobody could see his or her true spiritual condition.

Jesus told His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes to see" (Matt. 13:16). He wasn't just talking about physical sight. He was talking about the ability to observe and distinguish spiritual things. Although Jeremiah deeply grieved for his people, consider that it's better to be the one who sees than the one who doesn't.

If you are a person who sees and discerns well before others do, know this: You are blessed to see. People will fight against this blessing in you, but don't shut it down. *Like Jeremiah, God will fortify you to stand for the right things in your family, church, and land (Jer. 1:18). You are a watchperson and very needed in the body of Christ.*

Be Like the Serpent

Jesus sent out His disciples to the "lost sheep" of Israel like sheep in the midst of wolves (Matt. 10). The problem is that wolves eat sheep and will tear them to pieces. Jesus then revealed how they would turn the tables to subdue and captivate their enemies. He said, "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves (v. 16)."

To be like a dove is an analogy that most of us can connect to. To be like a snake, however, is challenging because we often connect snakes to Satan and as something that is accursed (Gen. 3:1, 14). Furthermore, it's obvious that we can't beat evil by being evil or overcome darkness if we too are darkness. So how, then, should we be like the snake?

I have a friend in Oregon, a prophet, who encounters the voice of God mostly through nature and creation (Ps. 19:1-3). It's an unusual *metron* (Greek: sphere) with an artistic and revelatory outflow. I knew he would be the one to ask about snakes and doves in the context of this verse in Matthew 10:16.

In summary, he said this:

“Snakes do not rely so much on conventional sensory input such as their eyes, ears and nose. They have specialized sensory organs that pick up thermal readings, vibrations through their jawbones and scent particles in the air with their tongue, which they touch to a highly sensitive organ called a Jacobson’s organ in the roof of their mouth. In short, snakes discern what others don’t see, hear or smell in the natural. Through this organ, the Jacobson’s organ, they translate what they sense in the air. Snakes, therefore, are ‘discerners.’ Furthermore, the meaning of Jacob is supplanter, which is one who overthrows. Therefore one acting like the snake can overthrow an enemy once they discern what is going on in the spirit.”

The Holy Spirit’s gift of discerning of spirits (1 Cor. 12:10) is being released on His church with an increased intensity and authority. This gift is a divine ability to see past the surface and know the spirit and heart motive behind people and circumstances. Jesus is coming back for a church without spot or wrinkle. He is also coming back for a church that is effective in her assignment to disciple nations.

Not only have we been sent out like sheep among wolves, but Satan has sent in his wolves to devour the sheep. Like Jeremiah, it’s frustrating to see demonic encroachment when you are the first one to see it or the only one to see it. Regardless, you are to be like the snake that discerns the wolf and overthrows it. Being a lover of Jesus and His church means that we are to discern well and act as skilled gatekeepers. This stops cycles of unrighteousness from becoming created—cycles that will ultimately destroy our peace.

Be Like the Dove

Our first introduction to the dove is in Genesis 8 and in

connection with the life of Noah. Noah had already built the ark to shelter his family and a cross-section of every species of animal on earth, both clean and unclean. At the command of God, the rains fell and the fountains of the deep opened up, flooding the Earth until every living thing that breathed died.

As the waters began to recede, Noah first sent out the raven and then the dove to help him determine the conditions of the flooding and the land. The raven flew back and forth over the water but disappeared. The dove, however, could not find a place to rest its feet and so returned to the ark (Gen. 8:9). A week later, it was sent out again. This time it returned to the ark with an olive branch, signaling that land was near, which meant that rest was near. On its third trek out, the dove didn't return. The dove had found its resting place, and soon the ark would too.

In the "serpents and doves" passage in Matthew 10, Jesus instructs His disciples about what to do with their peace. We often equate the dove as a symbol of peace, making this instruction significant. "When you come into a house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you" (Matt. 10:12-13). Just like Noah sent out the dove to determine the conditions, the disciples could likewise send out their peace to determine the conditions. If their peace found a place to land, then they were supposed to be in that place. If it didn't, they were to move on.

Where is the peace of God leading you (Col. 3:15)? Has the dove found a place to rest? We've all been given the general command to "Go and make disciples of all nations," but it's the peace of God that directs our hearts as to exactly where in the nations we are to rest our feet and bring the gospel of peace. His peace might lead you into the most chaotic situation, yet it's His peace that makes the choice for you and not external circumstances.

Finally, Jesus tells His disciples that to be like the dove, they were also to be harmless. The word *harmless* in the Vines dictionary means to be unmixed, pure, guileless and discerning of what is evil. For the disciples, this meant they were to keep their actions and motives pure. These guys were walking in miracles, which attracts attention (human and demonic) and “options.” Therefore, they were not to be led by fame, money or power. They were to discern well, even their own hearts, and to be led by His peace.

The Dove of all doves is the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit took the form of a dove and descended upon Him (Matt. 3:16). He had found His resting place! Soon after, this same Dove drove Jesus into the wilderness to be tested by Satan.

This same Dove led Jesus to the cross and this same Dove resurrected Jesus from the dead. This tells us clearly that peace is not passive. *When wolves come to devour, it's the dove that rises up.* It's the dove that rises up in the face of injustice and unrighteousness. It's the dove that rises up to create peace so that your family, church, and nation can enter His rest.

It's time to “Rise up, dove.” –Jesus

Jennifer Eivaz is a vibrant minister and international conference speaker who carries the wisdom and fire of the Holy Spirit. She presently serves as an executive pastor with Harvest Christian Center in Turlock, California, and is focused on raising up a passionate and effective prayer community that is tempered with love and hears the voice of God accurately. Jennifer loves the presence of God and is a prophetic voice to her church and to others. Her teaching style is authentic and aimed at the heart, having been built on her personal testimony of God's incredible goodness and miraculous display in her life and in the life of her church. She is married to HCC Senior Pastor Ron Eivaz, and they have

two wonderful children. She's a featured writer for several online publications including the Elijah List and Charisma magazine. She's also written a book titled The Intercessors Handbook.

For the original article, visit .