

## Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

April 23, 2023 Elemental: Wind.

### I Intro.

We're well into spring, and headed to the end of the school year. It's amazing how fast time flies. The staff and elders are working to bring some new and innovative ideas in all areas of our church life. We have seen an increased activity in our children's ministry, and we're working on new ideas for both our children and our students. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know. This is our weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from Sunday's message. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. You can use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey.

### II Recap.

Yup...we're still in the woo-woo **"Elemental"** series. Finding and encountering God in the ordinary things all around us. Last week we talked about how we can find God in the world around us. This truth should not only cry out to the presence of God, but also when we find ourselves in those times in which God feels far away, we can trust we are never out of his presence. And that realization should give us some comfort. Today we talk about wind. This will be a deep dive.

### III Sunday.

Wind. Let's talk about it.

**What do you think about...wind?** Sorry, I had to just smile at this question.

**Let's get a little more philosophical? What does wind represent...for you?**

We're just going to jump into our passages today and build an understanding of the role and nature of wind from scripture. This will be a walk through a good bit of scripture. We will give you each scripture, have a brief conversation about what wind represents in it, and then end with an overarching larger view of this element.

**1. Wind represents order. (Genesis 1:1-2)** Before the earth was created it was; *"tohu wabohu"*-emptiness, chaos, futility. Not 'nothingness', but lack of order. There was 'stuff'. Just not identifiable stuff. Like that one drawer in your kitchen. I don't want this to be just cool info that we hold distant from us as knowledge about God. I want this to be truths about the world, how God moves through chaos and turmoil, and creates something beautiful that can encourage us now.

**Where in your life do you feel emptiness, chaos, futility, lack of order. There is stuff, so much stuff, just not identifiable or useful stuff?**

You can begin to see, put the pieces in place, that even in your own life there needs to be this presence, this raw power, this movement, that brings order, and fullness. God's spirit makes things recognizable, brings order, out of chaos and disorder. Spirit of God is; **"Ruach"**- wind, spirit, the

unseen movement, invisible force. A powerful movement that cannot of itself be seen, but its effects can be. How the spirit, breath, wind, of God hovered over the unruly, unrecognizable stuff, and brought order, and meaning to the meaningless void.

**2. Wind represents life. (Genesis 2:7)** Still in the act of creation. The spirit/wind '*ruach*' that brought order from chaos, recognizable out of unrecognizable, is the same wind that brings life to the lifeless. Yes, this is a cool fact, interesting info. BUT...it is also truth that we can use in our lives, in our community, and our world. What feels lifeless, dead, directionless, can have this wind, spirit, breath poured into it, and what was once lifeless becomes a living thing.

**What in your life feels lifeless, no movement, needs a strong powerful breath of God?**

These are just a few of the mentions of wind, breath, spirit, in the O.T. I could mention so many more. Moses. Ezekiel and the dry bones, Elijah experiencing God. God speaking to the prophets and kings, and more. Now a few passages from the New Testament.

**3. Wind is untamable. (John 3:5-8)** The Greek word born out of the Hebrew word *Ruach* is *Pneuma*. This is where we get the word; pneumonia. And what kind of tools are powered by air? Pneumatic. And also that little tube you use at the bank. *Pneuma* is the vital spirit, soul, creative force, movement, the thing necessary to life. It is also in Greek culture connected to 'music'. A beautiful, inspiring movement. It's not just a wind, but *pneuma* adds the understanding of breath as a 'warm wind'. A wind that has something extra in it. Wind that brings life. The first warm breeze of early spring. Means it is wind, that also contains a little...**fire**. Some of you are way ahead of me, and be patient...we'll get there. You cannot tame or understand the wind, spirit, especially if it comes extra spicy. And we don't always understand it. It does what it wants to do.

**4. Wind counters fear and brings courage. (John 20:19-23)** When everything seems to be a bit too much. We are unsure, fearful, everything feels unrecognizable. This holy breath, hot wind, brings assurance, comfort, conviction in uncertain times. The same exact spirit, wind, breath, pneuma, invisible force, meets fear, and gives courage in spite of it. But it also does a good work within us. We kind of ignore or gloss over the later part of this passage. This wind calls us to work. This wind is contagious. Where it blows no one can predict or know, but we know where it comes from.

**5. Wind is raw power. (Acts 2:1-4)** Wind, spirit, breath, is power, new life, energy, FIRE. It unites in diversity. It doesn't make everyone the same. It recognizes the uniqueness and is big enough to reach out to everyone. This is God's continued plan from creation, calling, sending out. Wind is everywhere, and sends us out to where it already is. Wind comes to us and grabs us. It moves us from where we were...stuck and without purpose.

#### **IV Challenge.**

So, this is probably more than you ever wanted to know about wind. But when you do a deep dive into how scripture defines and understands the movement of God, his spirit, the unseen force, and what it means for us...it changes everything.

**So, what do you need from God today? What are you facing that the unseen presence of God can empower and encourage you? What can you do to 'find' him?**

Know you can experience him in every breeze and in every breath you take.