

## **Crazy Eights**

By Matthew Lilley

Eight is symbolic of new beginnings – it is the first day of a new week and the eighth note is an octave in music. Since last year I have been referencing the significance of the number eight and the upcoming season of new beginnings for 2008. To further explain my recent fascination with “eight” and to help others be aware of the importance of this, I have written this article.

This is some of what God has shown me so far, and I believe He will continue to give us more as we move through 2008. In the news we are hearing about the upcoming elections and the possibility of a peace treaty between Israel and Palestine. It is clear that God is shouting to us that we are in a very important point in time, and we must hear and obey His voice.

First I will share some of the biblical messages that I have received through reading God’s word or through revelations from other believers.

- When Hezekiah became king he took eight days to empty the temple and eight days to sanctify it. He restored continuous Davidic worship and sacrifices before God’s ark (see II Chronicles 29 for the full story). You will also note that Hanukkah is an eight day celebration of the restoring of the temple. Just as Hezekiah began cleaning the temple on the “first day of the first month”, we fasted and prayed for sixteen days starting January 1, 2008.
- God ordained circumcision to take place on eighth day (Genesis 17:12). During this season God is calling us to circumcise our hearts and be totally set apart for Him (Jeremiah 4:4). He is trying to reach the most sensitive areas of our hearts. We must allow Him to go there.
- David was the eighth son of Jesse (I Samuel 16:10-13). This season will be marked by the Davidic spirit including excellence and creativity in worship. There will be massive advancement in the promised restoration of the tent of David (Amos 9).
- Josiah began his reign at age 8 (II Kings 22:1) bringing a new reign in the midst of idolatrous predecessors. He began to seek the Lord for himself in the eighty years of his reign, which later resulted in his purging Israel of the altars of Baal. Look to a new reformation generation arising who will purge their lands of sin and bring Biblical reformation. Solomon also began to purge the idols from Israel in the eighth year of his reign.
- Jesus appeared to Thomas, the doubter, on the eighth day after his resurrection (John 20:26). Many doubters will convert and be visited by God in special and unique ways.
- There were eight people on Noah’s Ark (2 Peter 2:5). In June 2007, as we were beginning to receive revelation about eights and new beginnings, the movie Evan Almighty went to #1 at the box office. Make sure you watch this movie. Jesus said his return would be “As in the days of Noah” (Luke

17:22-35). He is speaking to us loud and clear! Now is the time to prepare ourselves and obey God's voice.

- Priestly ministry began on the eighth day (Leviticus 9:1). It is time for believer to step into our identities as priests before God. Through the blood of Jesus, we can enter through the torn veil into the presence of God and offer our praise and prayers directly to the Father.
- In Ezekiel's vision of the temple in Ezekiel 40, the outer court had seven steps (verse 22, 26) and the inner court had eight steps (verse 31, 34 and 37). God is taking us deeper and deeper into the Holy of Holies this year.
- During the Feast of Tabernacles a solemn assembly takes place on the eighth day (Leviticus 23:36). This year will be marked by large, unified "solemn assemblies" for consecration, repentance, prayer and fasting.

Through 6:22, we are moving into many new beginnings.

- I first started getting hints of this when one of our board members sent me an email on May EIGHTH with this verse from *1 Chronicles 22:19*: *Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God. Therefore arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy articles of God into the house that is to be built for the name of the LORD.*"
- In 2007 Worshipfest fell on September 7-8, which we felt was symbolic of moving from 2007 (seven meaning "completion") to 2008 – the year of new beginnings.
- We are going into this year with a revised band lineup, a new logo, a new web site and a new CD.
- Our New Beginnings Tour will host eight monthly worship gatherings in Greenville with our final meeting being Worshipfest on 08/08/08 at the Greenville Convention Center!
- God is helping us to see that we are a part of a much greater plan than just what is happening in eastern NC. Day Seven, our annual outdoor gathering of prayer and fasting, falls between the National Day of Prayer (May 1) and the Global Day of Prayer (May 11). The Global Day of Prayer is also calling for "90 Days of Blessing" following their Global Day of Prayer. 90 days following May 11 falls on August 9 – the last day of Worshipfest! Something HUGE is happening this year!

God also continues to use my personal life as prophetic example. When I began to share on new beginnings, I never knew how much my own life would be impacted by what God was doing. Last August I quit my job and started full-time ministry. I married Shepard on New Years Eve – around eight months after we started dating. We got engaged on October 16 (10/16/08 – 1 + 0 + 1 + 6 = 8) and had eight people in our bridal party. None of this was planned out in advance. We now live in a house together in downtown Greenville. I now have a new job, a new family and a new house. I had no idea all of this change was coming when I started speaking on new beginnings.

There are many other little things God continues to use along the way (my van's inspection is due August of this year – 08/08). I like to think of them as God winking at me. I believe He is winking at you too. I hope are starting to see that something incredible is on the horizon. Please prayerfully press into God to hear what He is speaking to you to do for this season of new beginnings.