

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

The God of the Fresh Start ... by Gareth

READ GENESIS 8: 15-22

- **W**hen Noah left the ark God was offering him a fresh start, the first thing he did was build an altar and worship God. Let me give you some practical insight about worship from Noah's example.
- **Noah had a definite time and place of worship.**
It did not say that he worshipped God while he unloaded the ark or tended the animals. He built an altar and had a definite time and place where he met with God and offered thanksgiving and worship. Abraham did too.
- **Genesis 19:27**
We need to do the same thing. Have a time and place where you meet with God daily.
- **Noah did not allow the issues of life to crowd out his worship time.**
Think about it. Noah had lost everything. There was land to cultivate, crops to plant, a house to build, etc. Yet, the first thing we see him doing was not building a plough or a house, but an altar! He had his priorities right. He knew what was most important.
- **Noah worshipped God when others did not.**
There is no mention of his wife, sons, or daughters-in-laws building an altar and worshipping God – only Noah. If we think about it, the concept of a fresh start runs the entire scriptures. The story of Ruth is about a fresh start. The story of Rehab is a story about a fresh start. When the composer of Psalm 30 says that 'weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning', that is a promise of a fresh start. When we read in Isaiah 1:18 the invitation to 'come, let us reason together', that is an offer of a fresh start. In Isaiah 43:18-19, the command to 'remember not the former things' is an offer of a fresh start.
- In the New Testament. The stories of the Prodigal Son, the woman caught in adultery and the woman at the well are all stories of people receiving a fresh start. Christ raising the dead, healing the sick, opening blinded eyes, making the insane and possessed whole – these all point to God giving humanity a fresh start.
- When Paul admonishes us to 'be transformed by the renewing of our minds', or that we should 'forget the things that are behind and reach for the prize', he is referring to a fresh start. When 1 John 1:9 says that 'if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness', he is speaking of a fresh start. When Paul says that 'if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation' or when Christ says 'behold I make all things new', the idea is that Jesus wants to give you a fresh start.
- This fresh start means that we have to trust God to not let the memories of our history prevent us from reaching our destiny.
- If God is to fill our lives then we must empty our agendas, schedules, preferences and pride to make room for Him.

(Continued next page)

WEEKLY EVENTS/NOTICES

Issue 18

● **Deuteronomy 2:1-3**

- We read that the children of Israel compassed (went around) mount Seir many days. We are all on a journey but sometimes we are like the children of Israel finding ourselves back in the same place time and time again. You have circled the mountain long enough. It's time to turn northward v 3 . As we turn Northward we're looking heavenward - Looking unto the God of heaven.

Events /Notices

- ▶ **Hike this Bank Holiday Monday @ 12:00** midday Sugar Loaf Mountain. Please speak to Gareth or Jean for more details
- ▶ **Next Bible Study** will be *Friday the 18th May @ 7:00pm*

Extra Services

If you have children with you, these are the facilities provided:

▶ Crèche and Pre-school Praise

Our crèche is based on the floor above the Meeting Room with baby changing facilities and toys to keep your young child occupied if they do not settle during the meeting. Parents are to attend to their children at all times. There is a short and simple pre-school Bible lesson during the sermon for 3 - 7 year olds in the Crèche (as arranged).

▶ Sunday School

Our Sunday School is open to children of school going age and operates during the sermon in the Sunday School room on the top floor. Our teachers have a Bible story and songs prepared for your child(ren), teaching them the need for Salvation and Christian living.

Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD (Psalm 34:11).

▶ Tea and Coffee

After the Sunday morning service, tea, coffee and light refreshments are available on the top floor in the Hospitality Room. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it (Hebrews 13:2).