

Wednesday Morning Devotional on July 3, 2024

Passage: Genesis 8:1-22

1. Can you imagine living with all those animals for over a year, enduring the smells and the noise?

Being inside the ark was certainly not a pleasant experience. Yet, entering the ark was necessary for salvation from death. The ark symbolizes salvation. However, friends, I want to remind you that life after being saved is not always a rosy one. After accepting Jesus, you may still face hardships. These hardships, however, are not meant to destroy us but to train our faith and mature our character.

So, when difficulties arise after believing in Jesus, instead of complaining, think about what God might be teaching you through these trials.

2. Noah sent out a raven to see if the water had dried up, but the raven did not return; instead, it wandered around. Why? It was likely busy feasting on dead carcasses. The raven is considered an unclean animal according to the law. In contrast, the dove returned with an olive leaf, bringing Noah news about the earth. Despite being just a bird, the dove brought benefit to Noah and his family.

We are similar. God did not choose and call us from among countless people just to live life as we please or for ourselves. There is a purpose in God's choice and call for each of us. He saved us to be bearers of good news. The good news is Jesus Christ. We should strive to share the gospel with those around us, both through our words and our lives. How can we share it? It's not difficult. Simply talk about the joy and happiness you've found in believing in Jesus.

Believers should be happy. To be truly happy, we need to believe in Jesus wholeheartedly, without divided hearts. We need to obey God. When you experience answered prayers, share those stories with others. Everyone has their own problems, big or small. There will come a time when they feel desperate for any hope. In those moments, suggest that they try believing in Jesus, sharing how God has been with you in your struggles.

And first and foremost, pray that their hearts become receptive. When we pray, God moves.

3. God told Noah that the flood would start seven days after He spoke, but He did not tell him when the waters would recede after the flood stopped.

Why is that? God has times when He reveals things and times when He conceals them. Sometimes, God hides things because it helps our faith and patience to grow. God trains His children in faith because He loves us. We should not live our faith emotionally. Living our faith comfortably can make us lazy and prone to spiritual decline.

Why do we go to church? We go to church to be trained. In this sense, a pastor is like a drill instructor. In verse 11, Noah learns that the ground is dry, but he waits another seven days. Even though he might have felt ready to leave immediately, Noah waited for God's timing. We must learn to set aside our own thoughts and timing to wait for God's thoughts and timing. In verse 16, God finally tells them to come out. God speaks both when it is time to enter the ark and when it is time to leave.

What is the first thing Noah does after leaving the ark? He worships. Throughout the Bible, God's people—Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David, and others—always worshiped. Worship should be the primary purpose of our lives. In everything you do, make worship your priority. When you move to a new home, worship first. When you start a business, worship first. When you graduate, worship first. When you get a job, worship first. When you get promoted, worship first. Making worship a priority in all things reflects a heart that values its relationship with God above all else.

God looks at the heart when we worship and receives it. Thinking you have no problems in your relationship with God while neglecting worship is a misconception. In a marriage, knowing what your spouse likes is crucial. If your spouse's love language is spending time together, but you don't spend time together while constantly saying you love them, it is like scratching where it doesn't itch. God delights in receiving worship from His children. The secret to a blessed life is becoming a person who worships well. Neglecting worship can cause life to unravel, not because God is punishing us, but because we step out from under His protective umbrella.

I encourage you to worship well.

Here's a question for reflection today— “Where should you be after enduring hardships in life?” “Shouldn't it be a place where you worship God?”

Prayer To Start a New Day:

Dear Heavenly Father,

We come before You with grateful hearts, acknowledging Your wisdom and guidance in our lives. Thank You for the example of Noah and the lessons we learn from his obedience and faith. Just as Noah endured the trials inside the ark, we too face challenges and difficulties in our journey of faith.

Lord, help us to remember that these hardships are not meant to destroy us but to strengthen our faith and mature our character. When we face trials, grant us the wisdom to seek what You are teaching us through them. May we learn to rely on Your timing and Your plans, setting aside our own desires and expectations.

Teach us to prioritize worship in every aspect of our lives. Whether we are moving to a new place, starting a new endeavor, celebrating achievements, or facing challenges, may our first response always be to worship You. Help us to make worship the cornerstone of our relationship with You, understanding that it is through worship that we draw closer to Your heart.

Forgive us for the times we have neglected worship or relied on our own strength. Remind us that true fulfillment and protection come from being in Your presence. Strengthen our commitment to gather as a community of believers, to be trained and encouraged in our faith.

As we reflect on the story of Noah, may we find inspiration to wait on Your perfect timing and to respond in worship and gratitude for Your faithfulness. Guide us to be mindful of our relationship with You, recognizing that our lives are most blessed when we prioritize our connection with You through worship.

We thank You for the lessons we learn from the story of Noah. Just as You used the dove to bring good news to Noah, help us to be bearers of the good news of Jesus Christ to those around us. Give us the courage to share our faith through our words and our actions.

Help us to live joyfully and wholeheartedly in our faith, so that others may see the happiness that comes from knowing You. May our lives be a testament to Your love and faithfulness.

We pray for those around us who are struggling, that their hearts may be softened and open to Your message. Guide us as we share our stories of how You have been with us in our times of need.

Thank You for choosing and calling us to be Your messengers. May we always be obedient to Your will and ready to share the hope we have in Jesus.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.