

THOUGHTS FROM CHAPLAIN RICHARD

Hi brothers and sisters,

I'm not sure if you have a daily bible reading plan already (I hope you do), but I wanted to share with you that for the last few months I have been reading Our Daily Bread, which is available online, in a small (free) booklet, and also on an app. It has been a fantastic way to go through the bible in a year www.odb.org.

The website and app link to 'Bible Gateway', has many versions to choose from, and you can search topics and passages so it is very handy.

I can't tell you how good it is to put aside a part of every day to learn something that God has revealed about himself. The ancient Hebrews concept of heaven (I am told) was to be sitting under a shady tree reading the word of God! I sometimes use that as a gauge of how connected I am to the Lord... Do I love and look forward to time spent with him in prayer and hearing from him in his word? Do you?

Many times people have said to me, "I'm so frustrated, I feel like I'm butting my head up against a brick wall, why don't things seem to work out, or make sense?" or something similar. The answer is to find our identity, meaning and purpose in the One who created us, to find our identity, meaning and purpose in Him.

Events in life can point us to how our relationship with God is going. When the bike doesn't start, how do we react? If we don't get our own way in a discussion with husband or wife, or if the kids don't immediately jump when we speak, how do we react?

If we kick our toe, step in the cat food, drop our breakfast... Do we feel like gathering up everything in sight and throwing it out/through the window, and storm off furiously, thinking "why can't things go right for a change!" After all, God is supposed to be looking after us!

In today's reading, Moses had similar issues with the Israelites who had just come out of Egypt. He only had to leave them for a moment, or they have the slightest difficulty, and they would go feral, complaining and being rebellious. In Exodus 33/12 we read how he dealt with the problems in his life. He said, *"Lord, you've told me that you know me, and love me - if that is so please show me your ways, so that I may know you, and find favour with you"*

In Exodus 34/9 he says *"Please help us to do what you command by being with us, for we are a stiff necked people, and pardon our iniquity and sin, and take us for your inheritance."*

How beautifully Moses deals with the reality of his own need to know God, his own hesitance to do anything without His help, and acknowledging his own sin and need for pardon.

What a great prayer to start every day with!

"Lord, you've told me that you know me and love me - if that is so please show me your ways, so that I may know you, and find favour with you. Please help me to do what you command by being with me, for I am stubborn and rebellious, and forgive my sin, and take me for your inheritance"

We know that these things are available for us through what Jesus did for us, so we can add with humility and confidence,

"In Jesus name" Amen.

"All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved"

Let's call on Him every day!

God bless you!

Richard