

**A NEW START, THE SAME OLD PROBLEM**  
**AND A NEW PROMISE!**  
**GENESIS CH8:20-22**

**ILLUSTRATION**

Dr. John Pemberton is credited with creating the original formula for Coca-Cola. He was a pharmacist and inventor who lived in Atlanta, Georgia, during the late 19th century. In 1886, Pemberton concocted a syrup made from extracts of coca leaves and kola nuts, along with other ingredients such as sugar, water, and various flavourings. He initially marketed this syrup as a medicinal tonic, claiming it could cure a variety of ailments, including headaches, fatigue, and indigestion.

**ORIGINAL SACRIFICE! V20**

Noah and his family (8 in total) along with all the creatures aboard the Ark, emerge into a brand new “start”, as God has judged the sin of the people with a universal flood (Ch6:7, 12, 13; Ch7:4, 19, 21-23; Ch8:21; Ch9:11, 19 + 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter Ch3:5-7). Everything on the land is new, a fresh start, but with the same old problem, human being's sinful nature! The first recorded act of Noah is to build an altar and to sacrifice upon that altar, clean animals (Gen Ch7:2-3; Lev Ch11:1-47 + Deut Ch14:4-20), don't think Saturday afternoon barbecue, think fully incinerated! The “burnt offerings” are the most costly type of offerings, as what is offered is fully incinerated. This is the first mention of an altar in the Bible, although chapter 4:4-5 implies that Abel also offered burnt offerings to the Lord!

So why is Noah offering clean animals and birds as burnt offerings? Noah's offering has two elements to it:

1. The offering is to thank God for His grace in saving Noah and his family from God's judgement (the Flood)!
2. The offering is also a propitiation for sin (an atonement) for Noah's and his family's sin!

Life on earth can begin again and it starts with an act of worship, with Noah as the worshipper, as he offers God burnt offerings from every clean animal and every clean bird! In doing so, this represented Noah's complete surrender and dedication to God (Leviticus Ch1). The offering of the clean animals is completely incinerated picturing Noah's total giving of himself! In light of being saved from the flood by God, Noah in the burnt offerings is literally saying **“Thank you for saving me, my life is no longer mine, but yours, to do with what you please!”** What a way to start this new start!

**ORIGINAL SIN! V21**

Look at God's response to Noah's offering of “thanksgiving and propitiation” - “And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma”, **this is the only time the Lord is actually recorded as having “smelled” a sacrifice in the entire Bible!** King David prays that he will (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel Ch26:19), while Leviticus Ch26:31 (Amos Ch5:21-22) declares that God will not smell the offerings of the disobedient. This “pleasing aroma” (literally soothing aroma) ends up being a common term in the sacrificial law, and fulfils Noah's father's prophecy “Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands” (Gen Ch5:29). This pleasing aroma caused the Lord God to speak about “man” and the Lord makes a promise

**“I will never again curse the ground because of man .....”**

However, despite God cleansing the earth from its evil and violence, **“..... the intention of**

**man's heart is evil from his youth**" (literally childhood). But does this evil only begin in childhood?

Genesis Ch6:5 **"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"**, the Bible sets out clearly that sin is a **"heart"** issue! The moment all human beings are conceived all human beings inherit a sinful nature, because of the sin that our first parents, Adam and Eve committed against a Holy God!

It may well be a new start, with an offering of both "thanks and for the propitiation of sins", with God making a new covenant with Noah, but the same original problem, human sin, remained floating above the flood in the 8 human beings that still carried their sinful nature into the new start!

### **ORIGINAL SUSTAINER! V22**

Our Lord is a God of order, beauty and a creative God. We see in this final verse of Ch8, God's "Righteous Rhythm" for all life on earth! **"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease"**, despite the same old problem, forever looming over mankind, God will continue to work as the original sustainer of life! Not only will God continue to be the only life sustainer, He will keep the necessary "righteous rhythm" of life going. No matter how bad human beings become again through their evil hearts, God will remain faithful in sustaining the necessary rhythm of life!

How important is it to recognise God's righteous rhythm:

22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him" (Lamentations Ch3:22-24)

### **APPLICATION**

How can we actively worship God today? **Romans Ch12:1 "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."**

