

Divine Encounters the topic this week , can be looked at biblically and as personal experience. But first, what is a "divine encounter? " By definition an encounter with the divine, a meeting with God, a special moment between you and God, perhaps it can be anywhere and anytime but one thing is for certain. Its unmistakable!

In the bible we recall many divine encounters between God and appointed people. Noah and building an ark. ("Get building or learn to swim! ") Abraham-("stop laughing and think the impossible! Im calling the shots here! ") Moses and the burning bush, Mary 's visit by the angel and many many others. All significant, unmistakable and impactful on their lives . I suspect that Jesus Himself had a divine encounter for 33 years! A complete, no holds barred, communion with God His Father and our Creator. We have them as well and equally unmistakable they do equally have an impact on our spiritual journey. We don't always talk about or share them as they are often personal, but always encouraging and motivating in our faith. They can be chance meetings, the timing of information and material help, the reading of scripture that amazingly is relevant to our situation, but whatever form it takes, we know that its a God moment and can't be coincidence. Often we are grateful and appreciative and wish to respond as Michael will allude to in the kids talk/activity from Deuteronomy 26. Sometimes we are just amazed and humbled!

In the passage from Luke 4 we read about Jesus' encounter with the devil. And that He, Jesus, had not eaten for 40 days after which he was hungry, with good reason! And resisting temptation on an empty stomach! I prefer the Matthew account in chapter 4 where after successfully overcoming the temptations put before Him, Matthew says in vs 11 "then the devil left him and angels came and attended Him." I suspect they provided a sumptuous a la carte menu with self sustaining products (for the environment).

So as we pray for and anticipate divine encounters may we also pray for God to divinely intervene as we think of flood stricken Australians and war ravished Ukrainians (amongst others). May all people involved be open to God's leading and may we particularly, as His people, be ready to respond as called. His Spirit is alive and well and in times of adversity is where and when we need Him most, as His ambassadors, in a fallen world. Amen.