

MT. OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH, 3500 Edwards Mill Road, Raleigh, NC 27612

NEWS & EVENTS – August 2025

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As long as I can remember I have been attracted to the mountains. In one of my early memories as a boy I remember taking a trip with my family to Nashville, Tennessee. I grew up in the flatlands of the South Carolina coastal plain, so we had to cross the Great Smoky Mountains to get there. As my memory recalls, I had fallen asleep as we were traveling through the night, I woke up to the radio playing a song about the early morning rain as the daylight illuminated the landscape. There seemed to be a mystery enshrouded in the mist. We stopped at a restaurant for breakfast that was near to a scenic overlook. As the fog lifted, I was struck by the awesome splendor of it all. A little boy's thought took root in my consciousness, *Surely, God must live here...look and see what He has done.* Sixty years later, I find that I still love a high place.

This seems to be humanity's assessment. High places can be glorious places or dangerous places. And it takes an effort to get there. Historically speaking, the stronghearted visionaries would respond to the challenge to climb the mountain to see the view from the high ground. Some views were so majestic that some of those early climbers chose to settle there and live out their lives, often generationally. I've always had a notion that I would have liked to be one of those people. But a friend of mine once told me that I needed to spend a winter there to know if I truly belonged. So far, I haven't ventured out into that adventure! But lately I am hearing I am not too old to do new things.

Biblically speaking, which is more of what I'm usually thinking about, there seems to be a theme that whispers to the human spirit that worship happens in high places. Both holy worship and wicked worship. The Bible gives us many examples of the spiritual struggle about worship that is out of order, and worship that glorifies the Most High God in the Most High Place. Lately I've been intrigued about spiritual warfare that has been raging throughout the history of man and the root of it all. I think this passage in Ezekiel has a Spirit-inspired clue to this mystery about the high places. Consider this word from the Lord concerning spiritual things...

*14 "You were **the anointed cherub** who covers, And I placed you there.
You were on the **holy mountain of God**; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.
15 "You were **blameless in your ways** From the day you were **created**
Until unrighteousness was found in you. NASU Ezekiel 28:14-15*

Now some scribes and scholars may say that the prophet was speaking about a human king, who lived unrighteously and was destined to destruction. I hold to the deeper interpretation that this is the Holy Spirit describing the root of the conflict of the holy war. Holy War of the High Place was provoked by an anointed cherub created, by the Most High God to enhance holy worship, but pursued a self-worship agenda. This kind of self-worship philosophy has held sway in human endeavors influenced by the desire to worship out-of-order things in out-of-order lifestyles as we worship figuratively in our high places of wickedness. Lately it seems like we are entering a time where God is revealing spiritual wickedness in high places and letting us see the difference in the choice. It's time for us to seek the Holy High Place of Worship of the Most High God.

When danger comes, human instinct is to seek the high ground...the safe place. For the blood bought, born-again, follower of King Jesus, get up to the High Place (wherever that is for you) and worship the Lord rightly, according to His terms of service. Get up to the High Place where you can see the Lord's vision. It's a much more magnificent view...a majestic view...He's a King, you know. Our part in God's Grand Vision...being with King Jesus...King of Kings...Lord of Lords... This spiritual battle over the High Ground, the Mountain of God, is all about the loss of the Loser who wanted to be King...that anointed and created cherub is the enemy of the People of God.

What a Friend we have in Jesus...He is for us...

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam

(If you are unable to attend Mt. Olivet's 11 AM Sunday worship service in person, can go to website www.mobic.org and click on "Worship Services" for live streaming or prior messages.)