

Why Does He Judge and Save?

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Date: 20 May 2018

Preacher: Jim Masters

[0:00] Please take your Bibles and go to the book of Joel. Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, chapter two.

If you don't have a Bible left at home or your cell phone just went kaput, you can pull out that black Bible in the chair in front of you and find page 648.

648. Joel, chapter two. I'm gonna read and we're gonna study starting in verse 18 to the end of the chapter. Joel 2, 18 to 32.

Then we'll do chapter three next week. So we'll be finished with the book of Joel. So yeah, four sermons in the book of Joel. Take God seriously. He judges and saves.

I have it up there, yeah. Joel, chapter two. Again, 648 in that black Bible. Joel, chapter two. I'm gonna start reading in verse 18.

[1:05] 2, 18. Then Yahweh was zealous for his land and he had pity on his people. And Yahweh answered and said to his people, Behold, I'm going to send you grain, new wine and oil.

You'll be satisfied with them. I will never again make you a reproach among the nations. But I will remove the northerners far from you and it will drive it into a parched and desolate land and his vanguard into the eastern sea and its rearguard into the western sea.

And stench will rise and its foul smell will come up for it has done great things. Do not fear, O land. Rejoice and be glad for Yahweh. He has done great things.

Do not fear beasts, animals of the field for the pastures of the wilderness have turned green. For the tree has borne its fruit, the fig tree and the vine have yielded in full.

And rejoice, O sons of Zion. Yes, be glad in Yahweh your God. For he has given you the instruction of righteousness for vindication, the early and latter rain as before.

[2:23] Verse 24. And the threshing floors will be full of grain. The vats will overflow with the new wine and oil that I will make up to you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the creeping locust and the stripping locust and the gnawing locust, my great army, which I sent among you.

And you shall have plenty to eat and be satisfied and praise the name of Yahweh your God who has dealt wondrously with you. Then my people will never be put to shame. Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel and that I am Yahweh your God and there is no other.

And my people will never be put to shame. And it will come about after this that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

And even on the male and female servants, I will pour out my spirit in those days. I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, columns of smoke.

The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of Yahweh comes. Verse 32. And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of Yahweh will be delivered from Mount Zion and Jerusalem.

[3:34] There will be those who escape, as Yahweh has said, even among the survivors whom Yahweh calls. There's been at least one of my kids who has asked really good questions.

Especially the why question. You say blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Why? Well, because blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Why? Why? Why? Why? Why? It's going to go crazy. Parents usually get stumped when kids ask why. There was an article. It's titled, How Children Ask Why Eight Times a Day and Half the Time We Don't Know the Answer.

That was the title. The article goes on to say, Curiosity may have killed the cat, but as any parent will tell you, it doesn't seem to do young children much harm. Youngsters under 11 ask why around eight times a day with questions that can leave many parents stumped.

In fact, a survey found that moms and dads are unable to answer their children's queries well then half the time. Watch my kids will come home and say, Dad, why did you say this? You know, it's good to ask the question why.

[4:54] And then you're supposed to say, Why? Yeah, there you go. One of you got it. It's good to ask the question why. Why? Why? Because in many instances, most maybe, maybe even all, it helps us to appreciate the reasons things are the way they are.

Or rather, why God has made things a certain way. Or does what he does. So we come to this part of Joel.

And we've established that theme. We take God seriously. He judges and saves. Why? Why does God judge?

Why? Why does he judge? Why does he save? Why does he do this? Why? The passage will answer that question.

Why does God judge? Why does God save? Or here, I'll put something else. Other questions related to the why. Why does God judge?

[6:10] Why does he bother to save? Why does he make the effort to save people who are so evil? Why does he care at all?

Why does he waste his time? Why go through all the effort? I mean, don't you think it's kind of weird?

I mean, why do you just go, and everybody just blows away? Why? It goes right back to who God was. All by himself.

The three persons. One God. Just loving each other. Totally satisfied. God doesn't need you. God does not need us. What part of this do you think you are contributing to God?

Zero. Nothing. Humor. Oh, that would be actually arbitrary. It's not humor. Why does God, why does God save?

[7:14] Why does he judge? Actually, the text is going to answer the question. We're going to go through, flip it around. I'm going to first deal with why God saves, and then we're going to answer the question why God judges.

Now, remember, I'll remind you of some things. Joel used this real locust plague as a framework to launch into warning Judah about the coming day of the Lord, or the day of Yahweh.

So he uses present events. So as Joel is writing, this is happening. I mean, it's darkness. It's gloomy. It's horrible. Everything's gone. Okay?

And he uses this present event to describe something that's going to happen in the future, and in the far future, and in the far, far, far, far future, at the end of time.

And that's where chapter 3 will come in next week. And so Yahweh, he announced, through a huge catastrophe, locust, that's chapter 1.

[8:14] He called the people to repent. That's in chapter 2, the first 17 verses. The people lamented and repented. That's somewhere between verses 17 and 18. And then God responds in mercy.

He would judge the foreign nations that mistreated his people, but his people, they'd return, they'd be delivered, and they'd be blessed. He will save them. He would judge the nations.

So these last two sections in Joel, they focus primarily on God saving his people and judging all the nations. And you'll see more of the judgment there in chapter 3.

And keep in mind, remember, Joel has just seen the whole shebang. All at once. You see something now, that later in the future, and later, later in the future, and later, and later in the future, but only later, just kidding, do we learn it's split into different parts.

You know, we would bring material, spiritual, national restoration, and yet when it's all said and done, God will judge, God will save. Take him seriously.

[9:22] Take him seriously. Now as we embark on this, just that you kind of know, kind of moving into this passage, my eschatological view of last things, I think it's important at this point to express that.

I believe Israel has a future. I believe it's in the millennial kingdoms. I'm what they call pre-millennial. And yet, because God has brought the two together, Jews and Gentiles, into one in Christ, it will not just be for Israel nationally.

It will be for the church holistically. So the church gets in on this, it's Jews and Gentiles, because there's only one people of God. Or maybe you can sometimes almost describe it as historic

pre-millennialism.

That's how they've sometimes described it. So that's kind of where I'm gonna be coming from, that's kind of the outlook that I'm gonna be coming from, the viewpoint, that's my theological, for lack of better terms, bias, if you wanna call it that.

But now, so I told you, the reasons why he saves, the reason why he judges, I'm flipping it, because we have, he judges and saves, so I'm flipping this. First we're gonna talk about why he saves, and then why he judges.

[10:38] So, seven reasons God saves, and only one reason he judges. Seven reasons why God saves, one reason why he judges.

And this is so good, because you see just the horrible aspect that these people are dealing with something horrible right now, and this is gonna give them hope. So when hard times hit, remember these reasons that God gives to save us.

Remember these reasons. This will bring you comfort. This will bring you hope. Remember these reasons that God takes the time for us when life gets hard.

And maybe God's chastising us as his people. So why does God save? Why does he waste his time?

Reason number one. God saves because he loves us. The very first verse, verse 18, the first part, then Yahweh was zealous for his land.

[11:42] And notice, numerically saying, his will, they're actually past tense verbs. And remember what I just said. Joel is speaking this prophecy while the devastation of the locusts is happening, and yet he is so certain about this truth of God, he puts it in the past.

Yahweh was zealous for his land. God pursues his people with a jealous love to speak about his land was to talk about his people.

They went together. That's why I believe Israel has a future. Because the land is connected to the people that can make people were connected to the land. Though we cannot manipulate God with our repentance, remember we talked about that last week, when we do genuinely repent, he's zealous for us.

He loves. He felt strongly for his people, like a husband for his wife. He's passionate for his people, motivated out of a heart of compassion.

He will fight for his name, and really, he will fight for his people because he loves them. Friend, things may seem bleak in your life, but do not despair because in Christ, the Father loves you.

[13:21] He's zealous for his people. He loves you. Why does he save? Because he loves you. Reason number two.

Why does he save? Because he loves to show mercy. Notice the next part of verse 18. And had pity on his people. Once again, the past tense.

New America Standard said, future tense, but really, in the Hebrew, it's past tense. Yahweh takes pity on his people. Do you remember in verse 17, where the priests were called to pray to Yahweh, spare your people, Yahweh.

That word spare is the same word that's used here in verse 18. And Yahweh spared his people. It's his mercy. Unlike the things mentioned in chapter 1, unlike the things mentioned in the first 17 verses of chapter 2, there's hope of a welcome response from God and the assurance of his compassionate love.

He wants to show you mercy. He loves to show mercy. And it wasn't necessarily because the people had repented. Not necessarily.

[14:42] Sovereign God chose to maintain his eternal covenant with his people because, as Joel told us last week, remember, he is gracious, a gracious, merciful God who abounds in compassion.

That's another word for mercy. He abounds in compassion. Why does he save us? Because he loves to show us mercy. Because when he shows mercy, who gets the glory?

You? Oh no. Us, as humans? Oh no. What is there savable about us? Zero. There's nothing savable about us.

We are not lovely, but he is. So when he shows us mercy, all the praise goes to him. This is why it's so important for us to see as we sing, show us Christ.

What is the greatest display of God's mercy towards us? The Lord Jesus Christ. So, Lord, show us Christ.

[15:52] Show us how much you love us in Christ and you show us mercy in Jesus Christ. You care about us for the praise of your glorious name. Why does he save you?

He loves you. He loves to show us mercy. Third reason. Because he loves his reputation. This kind of seems odd.

You see in verse 19, 26, 27, notice the end of verse 19. And I will never again make you a reproach among the nations. The end of verse 26.

Then my people will never be put to shame. The end of verse 27. And my people will never be put to shame. Three times as it's said. He's zealous.

He shows pity. He answers their cries. He spares them and he wants to and says he will take away their reproach. They will not be shamed.

[16:55] Never again. Why? Because God's reputation is at stake. Notice, it says, my people. there in verse 19, verse 26, verse 27.

My people will never be put to shame. So, no more humiliation or reproach. No more shame for them.

Why? Because when we are shamed, He is shamed. Why? God is so concerned that His people will not be scorned or ashamed because we bear His name.

When we are shamed, He is shamed. He has identified Himself with us as His people. God has identified Himself with us as His people.

We are His people. He is our God. He saves us for the sake of His fame.

[18:05] It's like that song by Chris Tomlin. You are the Lord, the famous one. Great is your name in all the earth.

God loves His fame. God loves His name. God loves His name. And we are so attached to that because we are His people.

And this seems odd. Almost arrogant. I mean, all throughout the Bible, we see God concerned about His own name.

I mean, you talk with any person who doesn't know Christ. Maybe even sometimes people do know Christ. and they will say to you, well, that's kind of arrogant of God.

That's kind of prideful. What makes them think you can be like this? Well, there's certain things about God we're never going to be like Him because you know what?

[19:15] He is God and you are not. Where does the why question stop? Right here.

Notice the end of, towards the end of verse 27, like right in the middle, He says, I am Yahweh, your God, and there is no other. You see that?

The buck stops here. Why? Because He's God. There's no one like Him. And yet, see, instead of us having the idea of, oh, that seems kind of arrogant and prideful, no.

It's actually opposite to that. It actually gives us such great hope because we bear His name as His people. He has attached His name to us in a special way through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are God's people now through Jesus Christ. How we respond to Him, how we live our lives, as God's children, God displays His glorious, gracious reputation in us.

[20:35] How we live as a corporate body, how we live in this world, we're displaying the fame of God's name. That's why God saves.

Because He doesn't want His people to be shamed. Because if we're shamed, He's shamed. God saves us because He loves us. He loves to show mercy. He loves His reputation.

Reason number four. Because He loves to give to us. I mean, we could say as part of it because He loves us because when it says God is love, love means He loves to give.

But I put this as a separate point because you see this in verses 19 through 26. I mean, the barrenness, they're desperate, no food, no water, desolation, destruction.

It's like the very opposite of that. And not just what they needed. An ample supply.

[21:50] Food that was scarce in chapter one was now plenty. He loves to give to us. Yahweh wanted His people to want Him and when they came with repentance, He restored their necessities and more.

The great giver loves to give. I mean, look at verse 19. Send you grain, new wine, oil, you'll be satisfied with them.

21, 22, and 23. Notice the three different people that He's calling to. First, the land. Then the animals.

and the sons of Zion. Rejoice, and He gives them the command, rejoice and be glad in Yahweh because He has done great things.

In verse 22, don't fear beasts but actually rejoice, it's implied, because look, what was wilderness is now green. Now there's green grass for all of you animals to just chew and chew and eat to your heart's delight.

[23:01] The fig tree, the vine, tree is born, it's fruit, it's in full. Notice He says, be glad, rejoice in the Lord your God, O sons of Zion. And then I, in verse 23, in American, New American Standard says, for He has given you the early rain for your vindication.

A better translation is, He's given you that which instructs in righteousness. That is, He will send down to you the early and latter rain as before. What's He saying?

The renewed rains, it gave an indication of Yahweh's forgiveness, the restored fellowship, His mercy towards Him. Let's just give and give and give. And they're not glad in their circumstances. Notice He says, rejoice and be glad, there in verse 23, in Yahweh your God, in the personal relationship that they have with God who loves to give to His people.

He wants to give to us so much. There's overwhelming abundance versus the times of despair before. Do you see that? I mean, look at verse 24.

[24:07] The threshing floors will be full of grain. The vats overflow with new wine and oil. I'll make up to you the years, the swarming locusts, the gnawing locusts, the creeping locusts, the stripping locusts, all those different types of locusts. It says, the great army which I sent among you, verse 26, and you shall have plenty to eat to be satisfied.

The times of a loving relationship with their God has been restored. It has been, was, oh, excuse me, instead of mourning, they're glad.

Instead of famine, there's abundance. Instead of drought, there's rain. Can you see that? The difference? And then, this is what I was gonna say. It has been or was God's intention after the fall to restore what was lost and he would use Israel to bring Messiah in order to bring about the restoration of all things.

God wants to give. He loves to give. And that's when he says what's gonna be their response to the giver of gifts.

Verse 26, a plenty to eat and praise the name of Yahweh, your God, who's dealt wondrously with you. See, the lack of food had caused him to mourn, to weep, to cry out to Yahweh.

[25:30] Remember that? Now, they'll give great praise and thanks to the one they love or rather to the one who loves them and loves to give to them. God gives to satisfy us, to satisfy us with himself but also with his gifts so that when he gives us these gifts, the gifts should bring praise to his name because they're not about wanting to give.

It's about giving praise and thanks to the giver. that's why God saves us because God loves to give. It goes farther.

Number five, God saves us because he loves to be near us. Now, it gets even more personal. Notice verse 27, thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel.

Yahweh's with his people because of his deliverance. His mercy, his abundance blessing. He reassured them of his presence and of the fact that he alone is their God and there is no other. Look at how he reaffirmed his love and devotion to them and that they will know him as Yahweh, their God. He'd be near them. He'd be close to them. I'm with you because the idea is, right, when the famine was there, despair, the chastising of God, God is everywhere.

[27:02] How can he mind? The closeness and the fellowship of his presence was gone and they felt it. But then God comes and he saves, he comes close to them and wants to be near them in a personal, real, living way.

Oh, but then he goes farther. It's not just I'm going to be in the midst of Israel. It's not just I'm going to be among you. I'm going to be in you.

Verse 28, It will come about after this that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. He will be near us by being inside us.

This is an amazing promise that Joel gives. The greatest way. Which, keep in mind, now we're, read this with our New Testament glasses.

Put your New Testament glasses on. Get your New Testament glasses and put them on. Now we can read this and say, oh, Jesus has come. Jesus has died. Jesus has been resurrected. Jesus Christ is exalted and now we get the spirit.

[28:13] God is, what great gift does God give to us his spirit? And now not only is he near us in a personal way, he's with us by being inside us.

And remember, Peter quotes this in Acts chapter 2. Peter quoted this part of Joel and gave the real meaning of this phrase.

See what it says there in verse 28 and it will come about after this. Peter actually gives us the real meaning and Peter says, and in the last days.

So Pentecost, Acts chapter 2, was a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. I will pour out my spirit. Here's God's spiritual blessing to the people.

I mean, get the idea here. As the rains were in abundance and the food was in abundance, verse 19 through 26, so will be the spirit just pouring down.

[29:17] Remember it talks about the early rains and the latter rain? That's what he's saying. The spirit's gonna come down. It's like that monsoon season that's coming.

Isn't that monsoon season good? That's good. I mean, you cannot get out of that rain. It's gonna hit you and then the drops are like huge. They're like as big as your head, you know, like, right?

They're huge. They're massive. That's the idea. The spirit comes. He pours out the spirit and notice it says, on all flesh.

Not just for the prophets. It's all without distinction. Notice, gender doesn't play a factor. Age doesn't play a factor.

Status, your social status doesn't play a factor. Look at the next part of verse 28. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. And even on the male and female servants, I will pour out my spirit in those days.

[30:18] And that was fulfilled in the book of Acts. You see those things happening. Dreams, visions, signs and wonders. All those things happen.

Peter picked up on that. Says, this is what Joel talked about. Jesus has come. The great giver has given the greatest gift.

And now comes an even greater gift, the spirit of God. Amen. Amen. Amen. So that the spirit would be available to anyone in Israel, even the world.

Appropriated through repentant faith in Yahweh God. We'll look at that in a moment. And with all these prophets, the people will be stimulated to serve God no matter their gender, no matter their age, no matter their social status.

What's only needed was to trust him. And Peter didn't realize that this included Gentiles.

[31:23] What Peter didn't realize, but he did later, was that all flesh really includes the Gentiles, not just Jews. All those who call upon Yahweh, all those who call upon the Lord Jesus Christ are saved, not in a universal way, but all without distinction.

In the Lord Jesus Christ, all are one in him. That's why in Acts chapter 10, the Jews were just kind of like, what's going on here? Right?

Because the spirit, Peter preaches the gospel, proclaims, call upon the Lord Jesus Christ, you'll be saved, and the spirit falls on them. And they're like, what? And then they said, oh, maybe, maybe this is what Joel was trying to talk about.

Yeah, you think? Of course it is. This is so pertinent to our day and age today. This point, I mean, the other point, yes.

But today, you hear within our culture about people wanting to see God, right? Right? Oh yeah, I mean, go stargazing. Go inside a huge, beautiful basilica.

[32:39] Is that where you'll see God? God to be near us. What is the greatest way today?

The primary way by which you'll see God. I'll have it up here. Do you want to see God? God. He's coming His Son, right?

The Lord Jesus Christ. As we looked at with Dr. Lawson, in John chapter 1, verse 18, no one has seen God at any time. The only begotten God is in the bosom of the Father. He explains Him.

But now we have the Spirit of Jesus inside of us. So, you want to see God? Look around. You'll see God in a group of Christians.

How we love each other, how we put up with each other's foolishness, sin, and fallenness. You look around. Yeah. This is the primary way you see God in the world.

[33:41] Because He's living inside us. Which is kind of daunting when you think about it. Because the whole reputation thing, the fame of God's name comes into play here.

That's why it's so pertinent. That's why James picks up this theme in James chapter 5. Don't complain against each other. Be patient. Confess your sins to one another. Praying for one another. Because we are the body of Christ. God saves us because He wants to be near us.

Two more reasons. God saves us because we call upon Him. Yes, yes, because we call upon Him. That's why He saves. You see that there in what, verse 32?

Yeah. It will come about that whoever calls the name of Yahweh will be delivered from Mount Zion and Jerusalem will be, there will be those who escape. Anyone who looked to Yahweh God to save them from His judgment will be delivered.

[34 : 51] And Peter picked up the same too, calling his hearers to respond to His message, to repent. You must repent. We must respond to God. Call upon Him and you will be saved.

Paul understood this too. Romans chapter 12 verse 10 through 13 unfolded things for us even more with reference to Joel's prophecy. God's chosen people no longer takes the form of a nation.

It goes beyond this. It's an international church of people committed to Jesus Christ who call upon the name of Jesus. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Any ears of light who called upon the Abbe would be saved and now that God is grafted in Gentiles that we now have the church, the Jew and Gentile as one, this applies to anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Come to Him today. This is why anyone who's here, if you don't know Jesus, you can come to Him today. You can become a Christian. You can become a follower of Jesus. You can be given the Spirit of God put inside you.

Look, we must respond to God. Remember that question in chapter 2, verse 11? Who can endure the great day of Yahweh? The day of the Lord? The only way anyone can be saved is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[36 : 12] That's the way to escape this day of Yahweh, this judgment. You must respond. And as Christians, we must respond to God's word today too. Are you ready?

I'm gonna respond to God's word. I'm ready to respond, to listen, to heed, to take you seriously. Last reason.

He saves because He wants to save. Look at the last part of verse 32.

As the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls. friends, it's not a mere matter of deciding to follow Jesus, though we're called to do that.

Those who are saved, they are the ones God has called beforehand. God must rescue us. There is no other way.

[37 : 19] God has called God. Bless you, bless you. The ones who called upon the name of Yahweh to save them are the ones that Yahweh Himself has called.

In other words, God saved us because He wants to save us. He's the deciding factor in who is saved and who is not saved. So we see God liberates His people.

He restores them resulting in sure confidence. He's dealt wondrously with them. They'll never be put to shame. He's in their midst. He's their God. Never again will they face chastisement.

He's going to bless His people. These are the seven reasons why God saves. Okay, now. He judges. God judges.

There's only one reason. God judges because He's the just judge. Notice verse 20. I remove the northern ones far from you.

[38 : 21] This is the removal of the northern army. This is how the armies would come against Israel, Judah. God did this with Assyria. God did this with Babylon. And He's going to do it again in the future.

We'll see that in chapter 3 more. Notice how bad it will be the stench and then verse 20 it will rise and its foul smell will come up.

For it has done great things. Yahweh would do this would so deal with these people who came against His people. Even though they're doing His bidding chasing, chastising His people they were accountable.

And notice how they acted in pride. They do great things. But notice verse 21 for Yahweh has done great things. He acts in a manner that's great because He alone is God.

He will judge. Look at verse 30 and 31. And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth blood, fire, and columns of smoke.

[39:22] The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of Yahweh comes. these things that Joel mentioned. These things happen during Jesus' ministry and after His resurrection and they'll happen in the future too.

When Jesus returns to bring His just judgment on all people, He will bring about His just judgment on all people. Yahweh would judge the nations that have mistreated His people but would deliver those who call upon Him.

He is the just judge. That's why He judges. And this is good. Look at the injustices in the world.

Look at the injustice with this young man who shot and killed those 10 kids in that school.

Look at the injustices that happened. The sex trafficking and now women are just prostituted everywhere throughout the world. and the world turns a blind eye to it. God sees.

Have you been misjudged, mistreated today? God sees. God will judge.

[40:45] You want to know why? Because He's the just judge. He saves because He loves us.

He loves to show us mercy. He loves His reputation. He loves to give to us. He loves to be near us.

We call upon Him and He wants to save us. That's why He saves. That's why He delivers.

That's why He rescues. And He judges because He's the just judge. He loves to be God.

Joel's calling us. Take God seriously. He's not one to be trifled with. And yet He loves His people, doesn't He?

Father, thank You that You do love us. Give us the hope, the joy that's found in the midst of horrible circumstances, trials, pains, and sufferings.

[41:50] Whether this is something that You're chastising us or not, we look to You. You love us.

You love to show us mercy. You love to show us grace. You're concerned about the fame of Your name. You love to give to us.

You love to be near us. You save us because You get more glory in saving us. So we call upon You.

Oh God, as Peter said, be merciful to me. As the tax collector said, oh God, have mercy upon me.

Thank You that Your grace just comes and sweeps us up and You comfort us in Your loving arms. Undeserved.

[43:00] if You would, take some time to allow your mind to be filled with the truth of God's Word, of what we have seen in Joel 2 this morning.

let it so fill your heart and your mind and take this time, time of silence for you to give praise, thanks and glory to the God who saved you.

Well, maybe you need to cry out to God to save you. and after some time we will we will give which is nothing but we will take the time and give monetarily to Him and we'll give to Him our voices and then give to Him our actions for the day after we have our closing prayer.

Let this be a time for this day to think and to let your mind dwell upon God's Word.