

A song for a storm

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 July 2019

Preacher: Philip Wells

[0:00] Well, I think my slides have got a little bit out of order. Let me just see what I was going to say somewhere here. I was going to say this. Come on. The psalm we're going to look at is about a storm. There's a picture that we looked at. It's about the Lord.

And it's about responding as people personally to the Lord of the storm. And the storm, as we read it and think of it, is an unstoppable power.

We can't stop storms. Even we can send men to the moon, but we can't stop a storm. It's powerful. It shows power, doesn't it?

It has its own wild, awesome beauty. And the writer of the psalm, we presume, saw a storm. And that's what prompted him to write the psalm.

There's something actually almost threatening also about a storm. You get that in the word where it says he sits enthroned over the flood. A flood is a threatening thing. It's not just irrigation. It's threatening. And the Lord is king over it.

[1:13] Good. That's the slide that got out of order for some reason beyond me. And let's pick it up again here with a plan such as it is.

So I'd like us to think about this psalm. It's just 11 verses, but it does make us think. So first of all, I'm going to do a bit of introduction about the way we see this.

And I'm going to do another bit of introduction, just looking at the whole thing. So those points are zero points. Then I'm going to make these points. What to give to the Lord. There's something about giving something to the Lord.

Then looking at the storm over the water. The storm over the forest. And the storm in the temple. It's almost as if the storm moves from the sea.

Over the forest and the desert. And the people in the temple are watching it happening. So that's the plan. I hope that makes reasonable sense. Best I could do. It's a big psalm.

[2:14] I'm only a small preacher. I have a go at it. But the psalm is much bigger than we are. So let's talk about spectacles. So I've got a chart there about how we look at the world.

So a world view. And I've got three world views. I've got one that perhaps people had back in primitive times.

I call that pre-modern. The sort of world view we have in our modern times, which includes science and evolution and all of that. And then the world view that the Bible has.

And I don't want to do too long in this. But how it got there. How it runs. What it contains. What weight and value there is in it. And if there's any redemption.

So you get the idea. So let's click. So let's look at the. How perhaps in. Should we say. Pre-scientific societies. Pre. Before the philosophical movement called the enlightenment.

[3:17] What would you say. That it got there through. Perhaps multiple gods. Demons. And the originators of the world have varying moral characters.

Varying moral characteristics. Some of them. Some of the gods in that view that made the world not to be trusted really. How it runs. Well it's unpredictable. Magic would figure in this sort of world view. Lucky numbers. Charms. Superstitions. Throwing salt over his shoulder. And it's a world which. In which the. The people that run it are the gods. The demons.

And human beings. So they're the actors in this. What it contains. Well it contains. Rocks. And plants. And animals. And machines. And people. That's what it's got in it. And what.

Weight or value does it have. It has. In this world view. There is good and evil. Probably pitched against one another. Yin and yang. Honor and shame. Some things are honorable.

[4:17] Some things are shameful. And is there any redemption. In this world view. Well. That's a. Bit of a. Question really. And I think in this world view.

Most likely. That. The only redemption. Is what people can do for themselves. So in this. Type of world view. You would have. Maybe try harder.

Or be. More. Beat your body up. Go and live on a holy mountain. And don't eat any food. And starve yourself. Something like that. Okay. This is a.

You get the idea. Sort of pre. What does redemption mean? Redemption means. To make something. That's gone terribly wrong. Better.

To bring it back. To perfection. To wholesomeness. So redemption. That's what that means. So the modern evolutionary view.

[5:13] Which is the view that is all around us. This is what people on the BBC. Project. As the view. And the view is that. Everything came from. Impersonal nothing. So the news won't say.

Today we pray to God. To thank him for the. For the weather. We just say. Over to. To Stefan. Whatever his name is. For the weather. So it's. It's. Everything.

Came from nothing. It's impersonal. And how it runs. Well it's. The physics is all there is. The way raindrops operate. That's all there is. It's a closed system.

Of cause and effect. And. You know. If you had a big enough computer. You could. According to this view. Just work out everything. If you knew how it started. Apparently. You could work out everything.

Seems a bit weird. Doesn't it? But anyway. People believe this. What it contains. Well. What does it contain? It contains. Nothing. But. The results.

[6:10] Of random. Chemical processes. That's all you can have. In this world view. Now. I know some of them. Look like people. And I know some of these. Random chemical processes.

Look like the Mona Lisa. And I know some of these. Random chemical processes. Look like the works of Shakespeare. But that's all. But at the bottom line. In this world. All you can have.

Is random processes. That's all you can have. Because that's where it all came from. It is said. And what weight. Weight or value. Is there in any of this? Well. Logically.

Nothing has any particular weight. Or value. You can't say anything. That's really. Grand. It's really. Important. You could say it was big.

But you couldn't say. That it had any particular value. The only values that exist. Are the ones that promote survival. So even. Love. Honesty. Integrity.

[7:07] In this world view. They're just things that happen. Happen to work. In an evolutionary framework. And redemption. Well.

There is no redemption. Because there's nothing to come in from outside. And redeem anything. It's just what it is. It is what it is. And that's the world view that we live in. That's what is going on all around us.

I mean. Not absolutely everybody. But in our western society. That's sort of the way things are thought about. Let me just bring you to this last column. Which is the Bible. And the Bible says. How does it get there? One God. Who is personal. And ethical. Creates and sustains the universe. So. There is a creator.

And his character. Is personal. He is a he. Rather than an it. And he has an ethical character. He loves. Justice.

[8:05] He loves. Honesty. He loves. He loves. You see. That's. How it got there. How it runs. Well. It runs by God. Now. He loses different levels of causation.

So he can use raindrops. And winds. And high pressure. And low pressure. And everything. He can use that level of causation. But underneath. It's him who's doing it. So he can use secondary causes.

But it's really. God who does it. And what does it contain? Well it certainly contains. Rocks and plants. And animals and machines. But people. Are in a class of their own. Because they're made in

the image of God.

And in this world view. There are things of weight and value. Just like these people. Would have said there's good and evil. Everybody knows that. And that. In this Bible world view.

They say yes. Absolutely. That's a fundamental of the universe. That God made everything. And when he made it. He said. It is. Good. And so God has put ethical values.

[9:08] Into creation. And it's purposeful. It isn't just a random thing. That happens at random. And it goes. Who knows where. It is purposeful. And the purpose is for the glory.

Of the creator. The creation. Shows. Shows. How great. God is. That's the purpose of it. And. Redemption. There is redemption. In this world view. And it comes in from outside. As. The God who made everything. Enters the world.

To redeem it. This is Jesus Christ. Who died on the cross. And rose again. So. That was. I tried to do that quickly. Those world views.

Will affect the way we read this psalm. And this psalm. Is very solidly. In this world view. As you will see. As we go through it. So. That was one bit of introduction.

[10:08] Here's another bit of introduction. It's a poem. It's a poem. It's a song. It tells us at the beginning. It's a psalm. So I think they would have sung it. It has all the. Elements of poetry.

Dr. Francis Schaeffer. The Christian philosopher. Once said. The artistic form. Enhances the didactic statement. Which is very helpful of him. To say that. But what he means is. Instead of just saying. The storm is loud. The poem says. The God of glory. Thunders. And it uses poetry. To. To.

Make it more emotional. To make it more. Have more impact. To make it get to us. At a gut level. As well as a. Head level. If you like. So. As we read the psalm.

You'll notice. It uses. Powerful. Poetic. Repetition. And variation. So it keeps you guessing. And it. It. Repeats things. But then twists them around.

[11:05] A little bit. So it says something like. The voice of the Lord. Shakes the desert. Then repeated. The Lord. Shakes. The desert of Kadesh. So it's poetic.

Repetition. And you will have noticed. I've underlined it in my Bible. 18 times. The Lord is mentioned. Did you notice how often. It is the Lord.

That's mentioned. And then the voice of the Lord. Is mentioned. How many times. One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Six. Seven times. So it is. Emphasis. Again and again.

On the Lord. It uses simple. Powerful. Sentences. Like this. The voice of the Lord. Is over the waters. The God of glory.

Thunders. The Lord over the many waters. Just. Uses simple. Powerful. Sentences. And it's describing. As I think we are to understand it. A massive thunderstorm.

[11:58] And it relates this storm to. The Lord. The God of Israel. And it calls. In verse one. Upon the mighty ones. And it calls on people. In his temple.

Verse nine B. And his people. Verse eleven. So it's not just about. The storm. It's not just about the Lord. It's about his people as well. And it relates them all together. Right. And this one.

Is got out of order. So. Let's. Let's look at what it says. I'll go through it in order. Number one. Ascribe to the Lord. O mighty ones.

Ascribe to the Lord. Glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord. The glory due to his name. Worship the Lord. In the splendor of his holiness. So this is the way it begins.

It's almost like. Well. It is a command. And it's almost like a command. Based on the rest of the psalm. So when you read the rest of the psalm. You come back to this.

[12:52] You say. Yeah. I can very definitely see. What he's getting at. Ascribe. Or give. To the Lord. Glory. Strength. Glory due to his name.

Worship the Lord. In the splendor of his holiness. It's addressed to the mighty ones. So. In my. Translation. I've got mighty ones.

In verse one. Anybody got anything different? Heavenly beings. Heavenly beings. Anybody got anything different again? Sorry.

Okay. Sons of the mighty. Yeah. That's what it says. You could translate it. Sons of God. So it could mean. The angels. Could be referred to as the sons of God. Or it could mean mighty kings. As the sons of God. And of course. As Christians. We'd say. Actually that's us. Address. You might say to us. Literally the sons of God.

[13:50] And what the sons of God. Are told to do. Is to give to the Lord. Give to the Lord. Say of the Lord. To say. This is how God is.

This is who God is. This list of things. Glory. Now glory. The word glory. Comes. It's linked with the idea of weightiness.

You know. Heaviness. Not heavy in the sort of sense of boring. But heavy in the sense of. You know. Important. Worthy.

And it's interesting. How the psalm just kicks in. With a sense of value. Doesn't it? Which our current world. Would find so difficult. Where would.

Where do we get glory from. In a sort of. Evolutionary. Science. Only. World view. World. But this world view. Says.

[14:44] This is a world. That has. A creator. Who is glorious. And we can say of him. Glory. It also talks about his strength.

His power. That this God. Is a powerful God. And it talks about his splendor. So verse 2. Worship the Lord. In the splendor. Of his holiness. You could pronounce.

You could translate it. The majesty. Of his holiness. Or you could say. The beauty. Of his holiness. Because it's the same word. That comes at the end of verse 4. The voice of the Lord. Is majestic. So the same word. Translated. Two different ways. But there's something aesthetic. About this. Something. Which we would say. Is beautiful. It's not just that it is. It's not just that it packs a punch. But. That there's a beauty. In the Lord. And it also mentions something ethical. It says. In the splendor. Of his holiness. Holiness.

[15:45] This is God's. Ethical quality. Or distilled. To its purest form. And. As we were saying. The other day. Our God. The God of the Bible.

Lives. In a holy place. And people. Who've come to him. Have to come in. On holy ground. And need. Somehow. To have their sins forgiven. And. Begin.

To be. Holy people. So holiness. Is right up there. Right at the beginning. And I stop to. Point out. The transcendent. Excellence. Of these.

Categories. And qualities. They're not just. Generated. By atoms. And chemistry.

Because. Our world. Is more. Than atoms. And chemistry. This is. Who God is. And he is. Above. Our world. And beyond.

[16:40] Our world. And greater. Than our world. And bigger. Than our world. And he is. The God. Who has. Glory. And. Strength. And beauty.

And holiness. And there are. Command. Right at the beginning. Of the psalm. Which we'll see. Echoed again. In the end. To give. Personal. Intelligent.

Honoring. Expression. To this. So the mighty ones. The sons of God. Have said. You should say. Back to God. That he is. Like he is.

You should be saying. Back to this. God of glory. You are glorious. You should be saying. Back to this God of strength. You are strong. And. The fact that they're in.

They're asked to do this. Is a personal thing. Isn't it? There's an ask. And there's a respond. Do this. Yes I will. There's an intelligence thing.

[17:36] What am I responding to? I'm responding to what I perceive. What I'm told. About God. That's what. These mighty ones. Are meant to do. I don't want to get ahead of myself.

And I'll just. Before we go on. I'll say. Are we going to make ourselves. An exception to this? Are we going to say. Well I'm not going to do that. Why should I give God glory?

Why should I. Thank him. Or appreciate him. You see the psalm says. That is absolutely smack dead on. What you're there to do. And it's a weird thing.

For people. To not. Give God glory. It's a. It's a perverse thing. It's a weird thing. Anyway. I move on. Let's.

Track. The storm. And I think. This is. Very weird. Just hold on. Because. I wanted the storm.

[18:39] Over the water. Oh.

Well. I reinstalled a complete new way of doing this to avoid all these problems, but no.

Right, the one that I wanted has decided it's going to disappear.

Oh dear, right, bear with me. Forget that.

It's not going this way. Yeah, bye. Oh, well, that's even... Oh dear, right. I'm so sorry, this has gone really squiffy.

[20:44] You've seen what I'm seeing. So number two has gone somewhere else. We'll come to number three in a moment. So look at number two. This is the voice of the Lord over the waters.

And it says, The voice of the Lord is over the waters. The God of glory thunders. The Lord thunders over many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful.

The voice of the Lord is majestic. So it starts off with the Lord over the waters. And let me just think where I was going with this one. Maybe it'll come back to me.

Thinking of the many waters. Do you know another place where it talks about many waters? Sorry? Creation.

Creation. Yeah, there's waters in creation. Yes. Many waters. Or many waters could be translated rushing waters. Because we sang a song about two weeks ago that contained this, I think.

[21:54] Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming? Do you know another place where it was coming?

Revelation, yeah. His face was like burning bronze. His feet were like bronze glowing in the furnace.

And his voice was like the sound of many waters, yes. There's several different references to many waters. One crucial one is in Ezekiel, where Ezekiel sees a vision, presumably a vision of the Lord or a vision of a man, and this man, his feet are like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice is like the sound of rushing waters.

So I think we're thinking like of a waterfall. Have you been to a waterfall? Like that. Anybody been to Niagara Falls? I've been to a...

You've seen a waterfall. And it's this... And that is used to say that's how God speaks. There is... His voice is as the sound of rushing waters.

[23:14] It gives us a thought there. And I think I had another thought, and I might come back to it in a minute. So over the waters we were. And now we come to the forest.

And verse 5. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars. The Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. So they're here to breaking things.

So this is powerful, isn't it? The voice of the Lord, as he sees the wind whirling around, cracking forests. Do you remember the hurricane we had in 1987?

And if you go to Tristan Forest, all the trees that were standing up, all cracked down. And this is what he's describing here. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. And then he uses another expression about jumping about. Okay? Jumping about like that. And he says, The voice of the Lord makes Lebanon, that big forested area, jump around like a calf.

[24:22] Or Syrian like a wild young ox. So this is what the voice of the Lord does. He makes huge forested areas. Jump around like little kids. Or jump around like lambs do.

Or jump around like a calf. The voice of the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf. And then it talks about lightning.

The voice of the Lord, it's something like cleaves or cleaves, cuts, I think is the word, with flashes of lightning or flames of fire.

So you see the lightning flashing down. And he says, The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning. And then we come to some more shaking in the desert.

The voice of the Lord, there's three shakings here. He shakes the desert. And then the Lord shakes the desert of Kadesh. So repetition there.

[25:21] And then there's another shaking, but it gets translated twisting. The voice of the Lord shakes, or twists, the oaks, and strips the forest bare.

So when the storm has gone back, all the leaves are taken off the trees. Anybody got another translation in verse 9? Anybody got another translation in verse 9?

Sorry? Makes the deer give birth. Yes. Thank you. It seems to be a, no, I wouldn't say it seems to be.

So the word shakes, or to writhe, is used. So in the translation about the deer, it makes the deer writhe in labour, in giving birth.

And I think there must be a question of whether oaks or deer is the translation we're supposed to use. But either way, we've got writhing, and twisting, and shaking.

[26:23] The voice of the Lord makes the desert writhe. And shakes the desert, and twists the oaks. So here is, let's see whether this bit works.

The voice of the Lord is powerful. The voice of the Lord is majestic. He breaks the cedars, makes the forest jump around, divides with flames of fire, and shakes, ooh, that was interesting, shakes the desert, shakes the desert again, and shakes the oaks, and strips bare the forest.

So notice the insistence that all of these are the effects of the voice of the Lord. This is the voice of the Lord.

I've been thinking about this, not quite the same thing as the word of the Lord, but very close to it. In other words, behind the noise of the thunder, and the action of the lightning, the psalmist says, that's the Lord.

What you are seeing is a genuine reflection of who the creator God is.

[27:31] It's a genuine reflection of who he is, and it's a genuine expression of his will, because it is the voice of the Lord. Behind the quaking and shaking of creation is the Lord.

It's the voice of the Lord. And I stop to ask us, now we have the voice of the Lord, we have the word of the Lord, not in a storm, but we have it in paper and ink, don't we?

Do we? Yeah. And I notice that the forest responds immediately to the voice of the Lord, and twists and shakes and writhes and jumps.

And I just ponder, how can it be that we are so slow to respond to God's word ourselves? It's a strange thing, isn't it? As Christians, we say, oh, it's really been really difficult for me to read my Bible.

Or as Christians, we say, I read my Bible and I didn't get much out of it. Or something like that. Isn't that weird? Because when the voice of the Lord speaks, the forest jumps, and we just seem to manage to stay still, we need to ask God to make us responsive to his word.

[28:47] Do we not? Make me, Lord, to tremble at your word. Make me, Lord, to be like, if you say go, I go. If you say stop, I stop. Make me your servant as you command by your word.

And I just ask, does the word of God have authority over us? I ask this question because it's important. If God says, this is how you're to live, do we say, ah, ah, well, I'm a special case.

I won't do that. That's wrong, isn't it? That is just so perversely wrong. If God says, this is how to live, full stop. Am I right?

Yeah. But we seem to manage to be a little bit more stupid than even the forests and the oak trees. Anyway, there we go. storm over the forest. And I just pause to think about God's word.

When God made the world, he did it by speaking. He says, let there be light. And there was light. He said it and it happened. Psalm 19, which I think I read earlier on.

[29:56] The heavens declare the glory of God. Skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech. And he says, have your world view that you see that everything, you know, the sky, the planets, all of these things, this is God expressing himself.

This is God showing us who he is. It's a wonderful world that we live in, isn't it? Please don't get the spectacles of, you know, that third column, the just evolutionary scientists, and say, oh, it just happened by itself.

It has no meaning. It just is. Even Brian Cox, the, you know, the atheist, very clever physicist, even he would say, you know, it's so wonderful.

Look in the skies, it's just amazing. Even he's amazed, but he doesn't know why he's amazed. We know, we look we're amazed because it's God who's showing us himself, isn't it? Romans 1.20 puts it theologically and it says, from the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen.

He shows us he's there. He shows us something of the sort of person he is, his eternal power, his qualities, through this created world.

[31:18] And on the last day, God is going to say to everybody, I showed you who I was. And they'll say, no, you didn't. And he'll say, actually, I did. And I showed you very clearly.

And it was you who put your spectacles on so that you couldn't see or covered your eyes so that you couldn't see. I showed you very clearly and you never gave me glory and you never thanked me.

And that's a blameworthy thing. It's a bit hard for us to get because we're so good at being, blinding ourselves, isn't it? But God clearly shows himself in creation.

And we need to unlearn the modern way of seeing. And learn again to discern God himself in the created world. Do you see a glove? I'm just trying to think like magicians.

Do magicians sometimes wear gloves? I don't know. I'm just trying to think of an example of a gloved hand. This way, sir, or whatever. The gloved hand expresses the hand inside the glove, doesn't it?

[32:21] So if it's a, I don't know, if you go to a very posh hotel and somebody comes down at the top had to greet you at the front door and open the door of your limo and he has gloves and he says, this way, madam, or this way, sir, the glove expresses something of the hand that you can't see inside it.

And the Bible tells us that the glove is like the created world and the hand inside it is the creator and the created world is expressing the will, the character, the instructions of the creator.

Let's move on. So we, technology aside, we've looked at the voice of the Lord over the waters, we've looked at the voice of the Lord over the forest, we've looked at the voice of the Lord shaking the desert and now we come to the end of verse 9, to the temple.

Now this is a key place. This psalm is not just about nature, it is about redemption and the temple is a very special place in God's creation.

It is the place that, as it were, joins heaven and earth. Now, this is Old Testament. Nowadays, God does things differently. He joins heaven and earth in a different way but in those days it was a physical location on a mountain, a building in which God, as it were, met people from heaven on earth.

[34:00] His mountain, his city, his temple. And I want to stop and say the temple is not just any old religious building. It is not even a synagogue.

It is a temple, a place of atoning sacrifice. And in the temple, every single day, life was given up as a substitute for the people and blood was shed in blood sacrifice.

sacrifice. The temple was like a butcher shop, if you like. There was blood, sacrifice, animals being killed day by day by day.

It is a place of sacrifice. And in that time, it was the only place in the whole cosmos where the God of Israel, that is the God who made everything, would accept a sacrifice and be reconciled to his people.

It was, if you like, the ultimate redemptive place for the cosmos. And now, things are different. We don't have a building that we go to. In this building here, we don't offer sacrifices because we don't need to.

[35:11] The sacrifice that redeems has been offered once. It was on a different mountain. The mountain was called Calvary, Golgotha. And that was the place where it wasn't an animal sacrificed but a human.

Jesus himself died. And that is the place of cosmic redemption. But in our psalm, the place is the temple. All in his temple. Now, I want to ask what happens in the temple.

So, there's a number of things happening in the temple. So, number one, all in his temple cry glory. Am I right? And in his temple, all cry glory.

So, this is not an impersonal cry, but a personal one. People, seems to me this is people, it's not the furniture, it's the people who say glory.

It is reasoned, wholehearted, humble, worshipping cry, glory to God.

[36:20] God. It's like verses one and two. Give to the Lord glory and strength, worship him in his beauty and holiness. So, I just pause to say, as I think I said earlier, that's what people do.

That's what people are meant to do. That's why human beings are created, to give God glory.

That's why we live our lives, for God's glory. glory. And I ask whether we respond to God's word and work in this world crying glory.

There's lots of other things that we can say. I would like us to be worshippers rather than whingers. I thought of that this morning, I didn't put it down on here. If the only thing that we can do in God's temple is complain, we've really got the wrong end of the stick.

We're meant to be people who acknowledge the greatness of God and are very, very pleased to offer that back and say you are glorious. In the reading that Rosemary read, Jesus said to his disciples, do you get this?

And they didn't really get it at all. And he said, are your hearts hard? Are your eyes closed? And maybe it's a question we should ask of ourselves.

[37:40] In Peter's letter, he says, this is you, you are a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

You've got lots of reasons, we have lots of reasons, Christians have lots of reasons to say, not only is our creator glorious, but our redeemer is glorious. You've got lots of reasons to cry glory.

That's a very interesting noise. thing, something was plugged and unplugged. Anyway, be that as it may. Second thing, what happens in the temple?

Verse 10, the Lord sits enthroned over the flood. The Lord sits enthroned as king forever. So in the temple here, there is a clear vision that the Lord reigns over the storm.

So let's put the kingship of God over the storm and the waters and everything. It said twice, the Lord is enthroned over the flood. The flood has an idea of something being threatening and chaotic.

[38:54] What was Noah's flood? It was judgment, wasn't it? And it ruined everything. It was a sort of unmaking of the creation. creation. And God sits enthroned over this.

We read about a storm on a lake in Galilee and there is a bit, this is a different bit, where Jesus was in a boat and there was a storm raging and he was asleep and his disciples said to him, don't you care that we perish?

and he got up and he said to the wind and the waves, quiet, be still. And the wind died down and it was completely calm.

And here is somebody who looks very much like king over the flood. Yeah? There's somebody who speaks to this, back there in Galilee, this wind and waves and he seems to be able to say to the wind and the waves and who is this person?

You see, who is he? Is he not the same person in the psalm who is enthroned over the flood?

Should we not see in Jesus this creator, sovereign, divine power, power, just as it were, within the envelope of a human being there?

[40:34] That makes you think who he is. I think it speaks greatly to the praise and greatness of Jesus Christ. Now what else happens in the temple? Verse 11, the Lord gives strength to his people.

So let's get this bit first. Now strength has been mentioned in verse 1. We're giving to the Lord glory and strength because God is a strong God. God. And here, it's one of these amazing places where this strong God, this almighty God, says I'm going to give you my strength.

He doesn't give all of it, but he gives strength to his people. That's a thing. He gives strength to his people. His people are weak of themselves, but he gives strength to his people.

It's the same thing as in Isaiah 40, 29, where it says, even the young men shall faint and grow weary. Is that the one? And it says he gives strength to the weary, and they shall rise up with wings as eagles.

This is something about God. He gives strength to his people, and we need strength, don't we? So, listen, he gives strength enough to do, for us to do what he wants us to do, even if that sounds humanly impossible.

[41:59] So, let me just give you an example. You might say, I can't possibly, I can't possibly, I can't possibly forgive that person. I can't do that.

And here's a God who gives strength and makes something which is humanly impossible, possible. Or maybe you say, I can't forget. I cannot do this, I cannot forget what that person said to me. And God is a God who gives strength to his people to do something which is humanly impossible. He might not enable you to forget, but he might take away the hurt or the power of whatever it was. Do you see? He gives strength to his people. And he gives it at the time when it's needed. So, I think sometimes we scare ourselves stories of martyrs going to be burnt and we think, I don't feel like doing that at all, I don't think I could do that.

Well, I think we have, as Spurgeon wisely said, he gives you the grace when you need it. So, you're not facing the stake at the moment and God won't give you the grace to go to the stake at this particular time.

[43:10] But when you do go to the stake, or if you do go to the stake, then he will give strength to his people. And he gives it in answer to prayer. So, you might have a translation, may the Lord give strength to his people.

But I don't think that makes any difference. God is a relational God and when we cry out, Lord, I'm weak, give me strength, he says yes.

And he says, my grace is sufficient for you, my strength or my power, my power is made perfect in weakness.

That's for us, isn't it? In our weakness, to call out to the Lord for his strength, he gives strength to his people. We're weak, understood, he gives strength.

What else happens? The Lord gives strength, so we've got this powerful storm, and we're thinking about the power of breaking things and crashing things, and the Lord in his power gives power and strength to his people.

[44:15] And the very last sentence, after this storm has raged and battered the forests and crushed this and broken that, the Lord blesses his people with last word, peace.

See, it wasn't what you thought it was going to be, was it? It's a wonderful change of gear. He says, where do we end up after the storm?

Peace. That's a very precious thing to have peace, isn't it? In this troubled world, he blesses his people with peace.

He calms the storm. Well, there's all sorts of storms that go on. The storm of guilt, he calms that by the redemptive sacrifice, not of animals, but of Jesus.

The storm of anxious thoughts, Jesus specifically says, don't let your hearts be troubled. Peace, I leave you, my peace I give you.

[45:33] Which is a remarkable promise, isn't it? Because Jesus experienced the full range of human emotions. Fear, joy, compassion, love, and even in the Garden of Gethsemane, the anxiety of seeing something ahead like that.

But underneath, Jesus is the most unperturbable person, is he? He never panics. Have you seen anything where Jesus panics? He never does that. He has that deep peace in him, and he says, I give you that.

What a wonderful thing to pray for. Lord, you said that. I don't have much of that. I have to say, please will you give me more of your peace? The Lord blesses his people with peace.

Here is the blessing that the priest gave to his people. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.

[46:49] That's where we end. We're going to sing a song.