

A Still Small Voice

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[0 : 01] Welcome to our service and as we come together around the Word of God, let us seek his blessing upon his Word. Let us pray.

Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, our Heavenly Father, we give thanks unto thee that we have access into thine own presence, that we can come before thee in this act of worship, acknowledging that thou art our Creator and that we are the created, that we are the works of thine own hands. Grant to us the humility of mind, of heart and of spirit, in coming before thee, our Creator, giving thanks unto thee that thou hast revealed thyself, not only as our Creator, but as our Redeemer through thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we come to acknowledge our sinnership, as we come to confess our sins in thought, in word and in deed, we give thanks for that intimate relationship that we can have with thee through thy Son, to know thee as our Creator, Redeemer, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we give thanks that through him that we have this boldness and confidence to come before thee and to lay out our petitions in thy presence, seeking that it may please thee to bless thy Word to us, that through thy Spirit thou would open our hearts to receive it, that it may be lodged in our hearts and bring forth evidence in our lives, to the glory of thine own grace, to the glory of thine own name.

For that is the desire of thy people, that thy name may be exalted, that thy name may be lifted up. And so we pray that as we come together around thy Word, that there would be that power and demonstration of thy Spirit exercised upon us, that we may be led into thine own Word, that thy Spirit would enlighten our understanding, and that thy Word would be applied to us in such a way that it would bring honour to thine own name.

[2 : 57] O Lord, we confess that we are dependent upon thee, that without thee we can do nothing. And so we seek that thy Spirit would accompany the preaching of thy Word, not only among ourselves, but throughout all our communities, throughout our land, and to all nations of the earth.

O that we will see days of repentance, days when people would sorrow over their sin, when they would return unto the Lord.

Days of awakening among our people, and days of revival within thy church, when we would be stirred up to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near.

We give thanks, O Lord, for all thy promises, and that they have been sealed for us through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

O Lord, we pray that the wicked would indeed forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, that they would return unto the Lord, for their promise is that he will have mercy upon them, and that he will abundantly pardon.

[4 : 24] O Lord, we acknowledge that we are in need of days of stirring up in our hearts, that we are in need of days when we will be awakened out of our slumber.

And we know, O Lord, that without thee we can do nothing, that we are dependent upon thy spirit, to bring such days of awakening and revival into our midst.

and we pray that it may please thee, to reveal thy right arm of salvation, and that we would see a people coming, seeking the Lord, a people coming, confessing their sins, a people coming to put their trust and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

People coming to know the salvation of the Lord, and the joy of that salvation. We pray that thou would bless those who are ill, O may thy healing hand be upon them, and may the bed of affliction be blessed to them.

For remember those who mourn, those who sorrow over the passing away of loved ones, a reminder to us that here we have no continuing city, a reminder to us that we are all on our journey to our long home, a reminder to us that we live in a changing world, but blessed be thy name that our hope is in the unchanging God, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

[6 : 13] Bless, we pray thee, thy people, those whom thou hast redeemed for thyself. Grant to us that we may indeed be faithful witnesses for thee in this world.

And we pray for any who have erred from the way. O that great promise of thine, I will heal their backsliding. I will love them freely.

O Lord, grant that they may return unto thee in a new spirit of repentance, that they may turn to thee and cry unto thee, taking words, saying, Take away all our iniquity, and receive us graciously.

We pray for thy servants who have gone forth with thy word. May they have the unction of thine own Holy Spirit upon them. We pray for the gospel that it may indeed prosper in our land and in other lands of the earth.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would continue with us as we come to read thy word, and as we come to meditate upon thy word. O may it please thee to take thy word through thy spirit, and to apply it to our hearts.

[7 : 30] And all that we ask with the forgiveness of our many sins is in Jesus' name, and for his sake. Amen. Amen. Let us now read the word of God as we find it in 1 Kings and chapter 19.

The first book of Kings and chapter 19. And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.

And when he saw that, he arose and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belonged to Judah, and left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree. And he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough now.

[8 : 43] O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my father's. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baking on the coals, and a cruise of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.

And he arose, and ate and drink, and went in the strength of that meat, forty days and forty nights, and to where up the mount of God. And he came thither into a cave, and lodged there.

And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with a sword.

And I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away. And he said, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord.

[10 : 05] But the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire a still, small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he rubbed his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering of the cave.

And behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with a sword.

And I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on the way to the wilderness of Damascus.

And when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu, the son of Nimshi, shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel.

[11 : 13] And Elisha, the son of Shaphat, of Abin, Maheoli, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay, and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which have not kissed him. So he departed thence, and found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yokes of oxen before him.

And he was the twelfth, and Elijah passed by him and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee.

And he said unto him, Go back again for what I have done to thee. And he returned back from him and took a yoke of oxen and slew them and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen and gave unto the people and the deed.

Then he arose and went after Elijah and ministered unto him. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word.

[12 : 34] Now seeking the Lord's help and blessing, let us turn again to verse 11. That is 1 Kings 19 and verse 11.

And he said, Go forth and stand up on the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord.

But the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a still small voice.

And it was so when Elijah heard it that he rocked his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave. And behold, there came a voice unto him and said, What doest thou hear, Elijah?

The last time we studied the life of Elijah, we saw him under the juniper tree in a spirit of despondency, and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my father.

[13 : 54] We noted that there may have been many reasons that caused the spirit of despondency to invade his life.

For instance, there might have been physical fatigue, because Elijah must have been exhausted by the events of Mount Carmel, then spending time in prayer, and running the 18 miles to Jezreel, and then 90 to 100 miles to Beersheba, and a day's journey into the wilderness.

There can be no doubt that he must have been on the verge of physical collapse. Another reason may have been what we call the valley experience, because Elijah had just experienced the ultimate mountaintop experience, wherein he experienced the mighty acts of God in fire and abundance of rain.

It was instead a spiritual high. But now, so soon, he was down in the valley, brought down to earth to face hard times and relentless persecution by Jezebel.

Maybe he was feeling discouraged and disheartened. Things were not happening according to his expectations. No doubt, isolating himself did not help.

[15 : 19] We have heard how during these days of lockdown, when people are isolated from one another, that there has been an increase in mental health problems. And Elijah must have felt isolated and lonely.

And all that can have a great impact upon our spiritual, as well as upon our physical well-being. Fatigue, mixed emotions, discouragements, disappointments, dust, expectation, and isolation.

However, we noted that God's care and love for Elijah was no less, as he slept under the juniper tree in a spirit of despondency, than it was when he stood on Mount Carmel in victory.

For we are told, as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him and said unto him, Arise and eat.

And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baking on the coals, and a cruise of water at his head. And he did eat and drink and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.

[16 : 35] In his grace, God provided his servant with sleep and food in preparation for the journey that he was about to take.

You see, the Lord knows our needs. The angel came to Elijah not once, but twice. And that is mercy. The angel's repeated visits are all a reflection of the Lord's mercy, of the Lord's love and of the Lord's compassion.

Have you ever felt the Lord touching you in your providence? The Lord touches you through his word. He comes close to you and whispers to your heart.

And maybe for a fleeting moment we arise and listen, but then we go back into our slumber. And yet the Lord comes a second time and touches us and whispers into our heart.

Oh, how many times has the Lord come close to you and yet each time you have gone back to sleep again. Well, here we are told that the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him and said, Arise and eat because the journey is too great for thee.

[17 : 55] The Lord out of his grace always provides for us. Paul could write, But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

The journey indeed was too great for Elijah, aloneness. It is also for me and for you. Moses, we remember at one time, was well aware that he along with the children of Israel could not make the journey to the promised land alone.

And he said to the Lord, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. The promise of the great commission is, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Psalms 23, we find these words, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. The journey is too great for us.

We are always dependent upon the Lord. We are always leaning upon the Lord. Jesus promised his disciples on the night in which they must have been completely bewildered at what was happening as recorded for us in the Gospel of John and chapter 14, where Jesus says, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

[19 : 39] I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. The word Comforter could be translated helper, one who will come alongside, and the word Comfortless could be translated orphans.

He promises to come alongside us, our helper, and that we will not be left as orphans, for the journey is too great for us.

And we read that Elijah arose, and he did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat, forty days and forty nights, into Horeb, the mound of God.

This event brings us back to Exodus, does it not? To the place where Moses met with the Lord in the fire of the burning bush. We are told that Moses, as he shepherded the sheep that belonged to his father-in-law, that he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And he looked, and behold, the bush burnt with fire, and the bush was not consumed. This was the mountain known as Mount Sinai, that mountain where Moses received the Ten Commandments and the blueprint for the tabernacle and its services.

[21 : 14] In Exodus chapter 19, we read, And it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceedingly loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

And when the voice of the trumpet sounded loud and walked louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai on the top of the mount, and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount, and Moses went up.

And in chapter 34 of Exodus, there we read, And he was there with the Lord, Forty days and forty nights, and he did neither eat bread nor drink water. Again, this is the mount where Moses indirectly encountered the glory of God.

Moses had asked to see the glory of God, and in Exodus chapter 33, we are told that the Lord said to Moses, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live.

[22 : 39] And the Lord said, Behold, there's a place by me, and there shall stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand, while I pass by.

And I will take away mine hand, and there shall see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. The Lord placed him safely in the cliff of a rock, while he revealed to him his glory.

And now Elijah arrives at this very place, and he arose and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of the meat forty days and forty nights, and to where up the mount of God.

And he came thither into a cave, and lodged there. He was found in the very place where God's covenant faithfulness had been previously displayed.

The place where God had established his covenant with his people, where he had spoken to the prophet, and where he has revealed his presence.

[23 : 45] It is interesting that in the New Testament, when Jesus was coming close to his death, when he was very much alone with the thoughts that lie heavy upon his heart, we know ourselves, when we are bearing a heavy burden upon our hearts, the relief we get when we share it with those who are close to us, at least when they give us the hearing ear.

But here in the Gospel, we find that the disciples refused to give Jesus even the hearing of the ear when he spoke to them about what was about to be unleashed upon him in Jerusalem. Then we are told that on what we call the Mount of Transfiguration, that he is encouraged with those who came to visit him from heaven.

And who were they? Moses and Elijah. It is interesting that on this occasion it was not angels that came, although they ministered unto him at his birth and in his wilderness temptation and in Gethsemane, but it was Moses and Elijah that appeared to him with him on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And their conversation with Jesus was upon the exodus that he was going to accomplish at Jerusalem. What is that exodus? Well, obviously, it is his death on the cross outside Jerusalem.

Moses and Elijah are talking to Jesus about this work which he is about to do, the work of giving himself to death. You know, I sometimes wonder if Moses and Elijah conversed with each other upon their own personal experience at Horeb, the Mount of God.

[25 : 34] The eternal realm does not extinguish our memory. In fact, it shall be brought to us with much sharpness and clarity.

Abraham said to the beggar in Luke 16, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest the good things and likewise Lazarus evil things. We shall not forget our spiritual experience, but they shall be purified.

We shall know them with more accuracy and with more intelligence. However, returning to Elijah, we are told that he entered into a cave and lodged there.

Now, literally, what Scripture says is that Elijah entered into the cave, not a cave, but the cave. Maybe there is nothing significant in that, but I would like to think that the emphasis is there to tell us that he did not enter into any old cave that may be found on Horeb, but that he entered into the cave.

And I would like to think that it was the cleft of the rock where Moses once said when the Lord passed by and when he revealed to him his glory.

[26 : 57] And we are told that he lodged there and behold, the word of the Lord came to him and he said to him, what doest thou here, Elijah? What we have to remember is that although forty days and nights have passed since he left the Juniper tree and made his way to Horeb in the strength of the Lord, Elijah is still in despondency.

He is still depressed. He is still in a discouraging mood. He is still suffering from spiritual depression. Elijah felt that he had failed in his mission.

Ahab had been unaffected by what he had witnessed. Jezebel was still defiant. It did not look as if there was any great turning in the nation, although it would seem that some did turn their hearts to the Lord, but what had come about his own seal for the Lord?

You know, there may be times in our own spiritual experiences when we feel that we have failed in our Christian walk and in our Christian witness. When we began in our spiritual journey we were also full of zeal for the Lord.

We were going to do many things for the Lord. And as we were licked back on our journey, we may also fall into despondency. We may also feel that we have failed the Lord.

[28 : 31] There is enough that will leave us discouraged and dismayed. The Lord asks him, what doest thou hear, Elijah?

You know, within the question there is a mild rebuke. obviously, Elijah has turned aside from the way the Lord wanted him to go.

We find that from verse 15 where the Lord says to him to go and return on the way to the wilderness of Damascus. from the answer that Elijah gave to the Lord, we can see that in his despondency and depression he had more or less given up to serve the Lord.

When the Lord asked him, what doest thou hear, Elijah? Elijah answered, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of us because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away.

What we have to notice here is that Elijah answered the question using the past tense, but the question was aimed at the present, what are you doing here now at Horeb?

[29 : 54] What doest thou here, Elijah? But Elijah answered him in the past, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of us and so on.

There was no question about ourselves, Elijah was for the Lord in the past, but where is the zeal now in the present? Why is he at Horeb?

We noted recently that some people will criticise Elijah for leaving just real and running away from Jezebel, that he should have waited like other times for a word from the Lord.

But Elijah had received a real threat on his life. He did not need a special revelation from the Lord to protect himself. He needed no special revelation to protect himself but to act on the precepts and principles already contained in the word of God.

Elijah left Jezebel for his life, but it's not the fact that he left Jezebel in fear, but the extremities to which his fear took him that left him here at Horeb.

[31 : 06] He was once jealous, but where is his zeal now? There is an element of self-righteousness creeping into his reply, an element wherein he justifies himself for where he is.

I have been very jealous of the Lord God of hosts and so on. Past performances, but no matter how great they were, they will not answer for the present, and despondency can lead us to sit back and do nothing for the Lord.

We have been jealous in the past, but are we jealous now to serve the Lord? In his despondency, Elijah's mind had become somewhat distorted.

Through Israel had forsaken the Lord, they had broken down the altars, they had slain the prophets, but Elijah had come to the wrong conclusion. He says, and I, even I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away.

He was forgetting that Obadiah had rescued a hundred prophets. He was forgetting that many of the Israelites had turned their hearts back to God when fire fell from heaven on Mount Carmel, and that the altar had been rebuilt.

[32 : 30] What was happening to him in his depressed state, in his despondency, was that he began to feel deeply sorrow for himself. He was failing to recognise that the Lord was at work.

And that is what happens very often when we become despondent or spiritually depressed. we lean on the past. Our minds become clouded, and we begin to feel sorry for ourselves.

We read that the Lord said to Elijah, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord, and behold, the Lord passed by in a great and strong wind, rent the mountains, and breaking pieces the rocks before the Lord.

But the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a small still voice.

The Lord told Elijah, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. But Elijah declined the invitation and remained in the cave.

[33 : 44] It was only after the Lord passed by in the still small voice that Elijah went out. For we read, And it was so when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering inn of the cave.

And behold, there came a voice unto him and said, What doest thou hear, Elijah? The scene reminds us of what happened a long time ago on this very mount, as we have already mentioned, when the Lord passed by and showed Moses' glory.

For Elijah and for me and you, the events of this moment teaches us that just because something is speed and spectacular, it does not guarantee that the Lord is in it.

And just because something is small and quiet, it does not rule out the Lord from being in it. Elijah stood and affected by the display of God's power by strong wind and the earthquake and fire.

It was a horrendous scene. But when the small, still voice sounded, it affected him straight away.

[35 : 00] And Elijah stood up and made his way to the entrance of the cave. There was something in the still, small voice that affected him. And there is a lesson for us all here.

We foolishly make up in our minds that if we are going to have an encounter with the Lord, that it must be in a dramatic way. What we tend sometimes to call the Damascus road experience, which the apostle Paul encountered when he was on the road and he encountered the Lord as recorded for us in the book of Acts.

However, the Lord speaks to me and you through the still, small voice of the gospel of peace. Through his word, the Lord awakens secureness and convicts a person of his sin and enlightens that person in the knowledge of Christ, all through his still, small voice.

Jesus in the parable of Luke 16 says, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

You see, we are not to look for something that will be spectacular and dramatic, that will excite us and cause great sensation, but let us listen to the still, small voice of the gospel of peace.

[36 : 31] When Elijah heard the still, small voice, he arose and came to the entrance of the cave. And may you follow his example as you hear the still, small voice of the gospel.

May you be affected in such a way that you move, you stand and make your way to the entrance of the cave. Whatever cave you are hiding in today, may you get up and move out of it.

Make good use of the day of visitation and opportunity, for remember, mercy will be followed by judgment. To Elijah the Lord said, Go, return on the way of the wilderness of Damascus.

And when thou comest, annoyed haste to be king over Syria, and Jehu, the son of Nimshai, shalt thou annoyed to be king over Israel, and Elisha, the son of Shehat, of Abin Maholi, shalt thou annoyed to be prophet in thy room, and it shall come to pass that him that escapeth the sword of Hasell shall Jehu slay, and he that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. The Lord here recovers Elijah from his despondency and discouragement in at least two ways.

[38 : 04] First of all, he makes known that the work will continue, for he was told Elisha, the son of Shapheth, of Abin Maholi, shalt thou annoy to be prophet in thy room.

Elijah was to go, but prophecy in Israel would remain, the work would continue. Elijah was going to be now anointed as prophet in the room of Elijah.

And secondly, yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which are not bowed into Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. Now there's a question about the statement of the seven thousand as to whether it is a revelation of the present or a prediction of the future.

The question may be asked how there could be seven thousand faithful followers of the Lord in Israel and God's prophet not aware of them. Our version makes it a statement of revelation, and that is the general way in which this is understood and which I always take in it that there were seven thousand living in Israel at this time in the present.

Leon Woot writes, God was saying that these seven thousand needed a pastor, a shepherd, to give instruction and encouragement under a most cruel regime.

[39 : 36] Elijah was to seek these people out and give them help they needed when he returned. However, Hebrew scholars notes that it can be taken in another way as a prediction of the future.

And some translations take it in the second way. In the ESV, this is the way it is written, yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him.

In other words, although the situation in Israel looks so grim, so discouraging, the Lord promises Elijah that he would preserve a remnant for himself.

In other words, he is talking about the future and not the present. And A.W. Pink favours this second interpretation. Well, there is no doubt that the context may favour this as a prediction for the future.

For everything else God says to Elijah here concerns the future. Who was going to replace him as prophet in Israel and so on. But whether it was a revelation of the present or a prediction of the future, what an encouragement for the prophet.

[40 : 53] And for me and you, these words are today. Elijah had complained about being the only prophet in Israel, but the Lord revealed to him that he has this appointed person to carry on the work.

That there was Elisha who would stand for the truth. And not only Elisha, there were going to be 7,000 who would stand through. And for me and you, the Lord's work will continue.

The Lord has his appointed people to carry on the work in our absence. And there will be a remnant saved according to the election of grace. In the strength of the word of the Lord we are told, so he departed then and found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was ploughing with 12 yoke of oxen before him.

And he with the 12th, and Elijah passed by him and cast his mantle upon him. Oh, let us be aroused from any spirit of despondency or discouragement and continue to in our work for the Lord, knowing that he is sovereign and works everything after the counsel of his own will.

And we find that Elijah left Horeb in much better shape than when he first arrived. His spirit was lifted, his vision was clearer, his commission was revived and renewed.

[42 : 27] God had spoken to him and he listened. And in the same way, when we listen to God's word, we too will be encouraged, we too will be edified and we too will be enabled to serve the Lord.

The Lord's work is not dependent upon me and you. The Lord will continue his work. He'll bring his purpose to conclusion.

But while we are in the present, it is our duty to work for the Lord. May the Lord bless this word to us.

Let us pray. Eternal and ever blessed Lord, we give thanks to thee that thou art the sovereign Lord, that thou art the one who is working out thine own purpose.

and we pray, O Lord, that however grim and dark things may seem to us, that we would not fall into the spirit of despondency, that we would not be spiritually depressed, that we would not fall into the spirit of discouragement, knowing, O Lord, that thou art working out thine own purpose and that thou will bring thy purpose to conclusion.

[43 : 56] let us in the present do our work, and when we are absent, others will be placed to continue that work by thine own sovereign will.

Our remnant will be saved. O Lord, we give thanks that thou art the one who encourages thy people, that thou art the one who is at the helm, that thou art the one who is working out through thy people, thine own purpose, and at the end that we shall all stand and bow down and honour thee, that it is all by grace.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would continue with us during the coming days. And now, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore.

Amen.