

# When God Speaks

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Holy, holy Lord God Almighty, you are a good and gracious King, O Father. You are all attributes are perfectly good and they're only found in you.
- Father, I pray that you would continue to be with us as we worship, we lift up our ears to you, open up our hearts and our minds to the truth that comes flowing from your word, O God.
- May it be used to convict us, to commit us, to reprove us, to build us up, to encourage us. So many things is your perfect word accomplished in us for those who call you by name, Father.
- So please be with us, continue to strengthen us, O Father, as we continue in this time of worship. In your name, amen. Please have a seat, turn out in your Bibles, Jonah chapter one, Jonah chapter one.
- If you were here last week, you got a little bit of an introduction on the two main characters of this book, one being Jonah and two being Nineveh, the city to which Jonah has been given the task to draw or bear a prophecy to.
- [ 1 : 1 9 ]     Jonah, he has already at different times prophesied in the land. He's done well with his prophecies.
- And now he's been called to do what no other prophet of God has ever been called to do. His job is to go into the foreign land and declare before foreign gods, foreign kings, what the word of God is.
- The city is Nineveh. The scripture tells us quite clearly, it is the great city of Nineveh. It was known at that time to be great in size.
- It took over three days to walk through it. It was great in prosperity and riches. Many Assyrian kings made it their throne room. It was the seat of power.
- And it was the seat of cruelty. For within just the Nineveh itself in the Assyrian empire, they were cruel people.
- [ 2 : 2 2 ]     And now God has essentially said that their sin, the stench of their sin, had risen so high that it's reached his nose.
- So he's calling on them to repent. So Jonah is charged with traveling to this great city to deliver this prophecy against their wickedness, calling them to repent.
- Last week, we took a kind of a cursory look at five reasons why Jonah wouldn't want the job and how often we use those same excuses when it comes to ministering to others, to open our hearts and our homes to those who do not know the love of Jesus Christ.
- So this morning, I want to look at the rest of this text in chapter one. Now, I wrote that part before I finished the sermon, and we're actually not going to get through the first chapter today, but they'll just keep you excited for next week.
- This is just a big chapter, and we want to unpack it for all that it has. But I want us to take a special note on the heart of God, the calls that he uses to get our attention, to serve him, to obey him, to ultimately love him.

- [ 3 : 50 ] If you remember a principle that I preached a few weeks ago on the Gospel of Luke, I think it bears in mind to remember this principle for the rest of our lives.
- As Christians in Jesus Christ, our lives are not our own. Our lives are not our own. They have been given to us for us to steward unto the Lord.
- And when we finally come to accept this stewardship, our lives will begin to look a lot different.
- We will not see life through our eyes, but we will begin to see life through the eyes of others. We will have greater understanding and understanding the pain of others, the process of others, and where they are in life as well.
- So, this morning, I'm going to look at three ways that God calls us and three ways we stubbornly resist God's calling.
- [ 4 : 51 ] So let's begin in verse 1, Jonah 1. It says, Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Emittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.
- So we know that Jonah is a prophet. A prophet is one who has been given a very specific word by God to give to a very specific people.
- He's not a person chosen to go and dispense his wisdom or his thoughts on life. He's actually given a very specific job.
- And his job is almost like a town crier, a preacher, as it were. And his role is to repeat the words that God has given him to preach to these people.
- So he's been appointed by God to speak the words of God. What's interesting is that nowhere in the text does it tell us how Joseph or Jonah was appointed.
- [ 6 : 00 ] Didn't tell us that there was a job board that he applied for or he was looking on Indeed.com, right? Looking for someone with a loud voice, good syntax, stressful situations, likes to travel and doesn't mind a spear or two being thrown at him.
- But the reality is we don't know how he was called and it's the same with us. The same is that the Lord calls who the Lord calls. And as such, there are many diverse people throughout all of time that God has called.
- What we also do not know is how Joseph received this prophecy. The Bible tells us that some prophets received prophecies through dreams and they'd have these dreams and they knew this is what the word.
- Some heard the audible voice of God. We remember Moses heard God speaking to him out of a burning bush. So God used various different ways to give his word to the people.
- So Jonah gets this call from God to deliver a message to Assyria in Nineveh. he ultimately does not want to deliver.
- [ 7 : 30 ] It's arise, go to Nineveh, that great city and call out against it. The message that I tell you and we'll read later that the message is yet in 40 days in Nineveh shall be overthrown.
- One thing I want you to take note from the first sentence in the first verse and notice it says the Lord. If you look at your Bibles it's probably capitalized.
- This is the Lord God Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal God. This is not the impersonal power form who created the universe which he is that is usually when they use the word Elohim but in this case he's using that word Lord.
- what it tells us is that Jonah knew God. God knows Jonah. He counts himself as one of God's prophets.
- Jonah was a believer in God. Jonah worshipped God. Yet we see Jonah chooses to run from God.

- [ 8 : 43 ] What's interesting when you study the Old Testament you understand that Jonah is not the first prophet who had an objection against God. You guys can go back to Moses.
- Do you remember Moses? God had given him a job to go before Pharaoh. You know what? Pharaoh you need to free my people. You need to free the Jewish people.
- And Moses gave all sorts of excuses that he couldn't do it including he had a stutter. Right? I just can't speak well. Well take your brother Aaron with you.
- All the excuses God resolved for him. Jeremiah and Habakkuk they actually responded back to God with a question. Like Habakkuk thought God was nuts at one point.
- What do you mean? You're going to judge God's people by using people who were considered the most evil wicked violent people in the world?
- [ 9 : 41 ] How does that work? Aren't you supposed to use holy people to do your work? And of course we remember Elijah.
- Remember Elijah? He had called fire down on the false prophets of Baal. And he was given a task to go before Jezebel the wicked queen even after physically seeing God do the miraculous.
- He ran. Ran away. But the difference is Elijah ran into the presence of God. Jonah, it writes here, ran away from the presence of God.
- Now I think it needs to be understood that when the text says fleeing the presence of God, it doesn't mean that he's trying to escape God.
- He understands that God is the creator of all. He is God, Elohim. So there's no place on earth, but he can go to places where he's not really reminded of God so much.
- [ 10 : 52 ] He's not reminded of his people, their ways that they use to honor God. Right?
- Away from God's people, God's land, away from the city of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, where the temple is found. He repeats this word Tarshish three times.
- It's almost if he's saying, if I can get to Tarshish, which is at the far end of the Mediterranean Sea, I'll have no more reminders of him, and maybe he'll forget about me.
- the Bible, as I said, doesn't tell us how he's appointed or any of that thing, but he's made a decision that he is going to run.
- Let me ask you a question. Have you ever tried to run from the presence of God? Maybe you are here and you are trying to run from the presence of God.
- [ 12 : 05 ] Have you ever experienced a call on your life, a call that you know was so true that God has for you, and you have done everything in your power to avoid that call, avoid that person, avoid that ministry, avoid that church?
- church. Perhaps it's a simple call to follow Jesus Christ. Maybe you kind of like the idea of Jesus, but he's so much better as a, you know, kind of like a second cousin you call on holidays or something, right?
- If he goes through town, I'll have him over for dinner. Am I going to break out the steaks? No, I'll just flip a hamburger for him, right? Just, you respect him, but he doesn't have a place of honor.
- But you know that the worship of Jesus Christ calls for the bringing out of the best possible meats and the best possible vegetables and fruits for him.
- He's a guest to be honored. Maybe it's not so much a call that you know that you're ignoring, but maybe you're in willful disobedience against him.
- [ 13 : 18 ] You know he's dispatched his laws, he's called us how to live with one another, he's called us to love, he's called us to build into one another, and yet we just decide to be silent.

Maybe it's your life choices, your relationships, your compromises at work and home with your friendships. Hey, you can probably in fact even list a whole long line of good reasons, friends, but at the heart of the heart of you, you know what's going on in your life is not good, and it's not the life God ultimately called you, for you, your family, and your friends.

What do we do? We run, right? Maybe not so much physically, but we avoid. Maybe church is no longer a priority.

Hey, I like church, going to growth group or a Bible study, eh, not so much. You find yourself visiting your Christian friends less and less. When they offer you advice or God-based wisdom, you really don't want it.

Your personal time of devotions in the morning are no longer there. It just seems so much easier to live life if I forget God rather than come to God.

[ 14 : 50 ] Things just aren't what they ought to be, and you know it has everything to do with ignoring God. What's interesting, we might be able to say, well, you know, come on, Jonah's different from us.

He heard from God himself. We don't know really what the commands are, what he's calling us to. The fact of the matter is, we do. We have a Bible, it's called the infallible word of God.

In fact, the apostle Peter, who was before the Lord and saw him transformed, tells us that we have a more sure word in God's word for us.

That we don't need any more prophets, we don't need anybody to come and tell us any new words. It's all there, it's complete. Paul will later remind us in 2 Timothy 3, 14 and 16, he says, for as for you continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, right? It convicts us, it shows us who we are, for correction, not only does it show us where we're off, it reminds us, holds us back to the right path, and Paul uses these interesting words, he says, and for training in righteousness.

[ 16 : 35 ] Righteousness does not come natural. As much as we might live in a world to say that good only comes from our heart, my experience with mankind is that there's a lot of bad and wickedness that comes from man's heart, and we need to learn righteousness.

And it says that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. But back in those days, prophets were needed, they were summoned, they were given a word, and they were sent out.

But Jonah, he took an extreme road to get away from the presence of God. He chose, like I said, the westernmost part of Spain on the other end of the Mediterranean, and as a brilliant piece of luck, as he showed up at the dock, there just so happened to be a ship heading the way he wanted.

We kind of work that way too, right? Hey, it's convenient, it's got to be God's will. Look at how everything so came together so good. This must be the way that God wants me to go.

So the first way that God uses to call us is through his word. Now let's take a look at God's second method that he uses to call us.

[ 18 : 04 ] Verse 4, but the Lord, remember this is the personal God Yahweh, the one who loves Jonah, he's in a relationship with Jonah, he's part of his covenant people, the Lord hurled a, what, great wind upon the sea.

and there was a mighty tempest on the sea and that the ship threatened to break. This verse tells us beyond a doubt this storm is no accident.

In fact, it tells us it's been motivated by God and created by God for the express purpose of ultimately communicating with Jonah.

How do I know? The Lord hurled. What did he hurl? A great wind and mighty tempest. Here's the thing.

Sometimes you and I can make decisions in life that have consequences. Sometimes we suffer through those consequences. consequences. Sometimes we live in life and there's troubles in life.

[ 19 : 22 ] And some of those troubles are quite normal and natural because we live in a troubled world, right? There is no such thing as a perfect life that is pain free, that is problem free.

But there's also storms that come into our lives because God ultimately wants our attention. See, we need to understand that these sailors who are charged with the cargo of delivering from Joppa, one side of the Med, all the way other to the western side of the Med of Spain, they're not fools.

Hey, I see a storm cloud going. You know what? Let's risk it, right? I hear there's a wind coming in. Yeah, we can do it. We're great sailors. No, no, no, no. Sailors sail during the sailing season.

They don't sail during storm season. So they thought everything was going to be okay. So here we have these men and notice there is this storm appears.

How bad is this storm? Take a look at the text. It says the ship threatened to break apart. In the original language, it almost sounds like the ship was determined to break apart.

[ 20 : 57 ] It's like the ship had a mind of its own. The ship wasn't going to break apart because it was going to crash on rocks. This storm was so violent that it was tearing at the very seams of this boat.

this boat was just going to get completely obliterated in this storm. From a pastor's perspective, sometimes I see people in storms.

And often it is a storm of their making. I've seen all sorts of people try and want to blame God for some injustice in their life, but that injustice was solely created by them.

I'm losing my family. My kids don't love me. I'm going bankrupt. I'm getting fired for the eighth time this month. God's not the problem in these equations.

You are. I remember sitting down with this young girl, had graduated teacher's college. I don't know what you guys call that here in BC, but Ontario you'd go to teacher's college for a year and then go teach.

[ 22 : 22 ] In a period of five years she had five different jobs and at the end it was the other end going on a sixth job. She just could not stay on. I remember just sitting down with her and it's that old proverbial question, what's the one thing in common with all the jobs?

She had a very short curt disposition. I don't believe that's always her hard intent, but nobody in her friend's circle took the time to say that you're actually really pushing, you're really rude and people really don't like being around you.

Often these people who were in storms have followed very specific patterns of rebellions in their life. They've refused good solid biblical counseling time, time and again and other wise pieces of vice from fellow travelers, but their response is I'm good, I've got this and that's generally always motivated by pride.

I have been in the church where people pop in here and there, they want to come talk to me. A couple of my churches, there was one man who was known to go around just hoping that someone would tell me that his divorce would be biblical.

He wasn't. It wasn't a biblical divorce. He'd been a horrible husband. He had cheated on his wife and he wanted to put all the blame on her and we said we cannot give you a divorce. You still are committed to that marriage.

[ 23 : 59 ] My friends, it is tragic, but I want you to understand this isn't God punishing Jonah any more than it's God punishing you.

Do you understand that? This is the covenant God. God. This is the God that not only makes the covenant with us, but he keeps the covenant with us.

We learned in Ephesians that God loves us not because there's anything wonderful or great works that we do. It tells us that there's a God who is such filled with such great love for us that out of the abundance and the overflowing of his love, we are his children.

So it's not to be seen as punishment. So here he's going after Jonah with a specific purpose.

And sometimes God does the exact same to us. So this great wind is blowing about and it's formed a mighty tempest and it's all being hurled at this boat by God.

[ 25 : 12 ] What hope do they have? What is man to do? Well, this morning I want to look at five different responses that we do in the midst of the storm which sadly make things worse rather than better.

Verse five, let me read it for you. Then the mariners were afraid and each cried out to his God and they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them.

But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had laid down and fast and was fast asleep. There's almost every type of response, right?

The first response that we see is that the resigned despair. Oh, well, what can I do? It's a storm. I'm just going to be on here like a cork in the ocean and however it ends, it ends.

You'll cry. You're going to feel bad about yourself. Why me? Poor me. And we see this in verse four so that the ship threatened to break apart.

[ 26 : 24 ] That was the ship communicating to them, hey, I'm falling apart here. With the planks creaking, the waves pounding, the water seeping through, there seems to be no control.

I've been there. Any of you been there? You don't know what to do. Life seems to be pouring in on all sides. You don't know what the right decision to make, the right decision not to make.

But if you've hung out with Pastor Dave enough, you will hear this word that he likes to use. It's called agency. We all have agency.

We all have the ability to use our will one way or another. We can use our will, oh me, oh my. Or we can actually use that will to begin checking our attitude and starting to think, how should I ought to behave in this storm?

And what shall I do to survive in this storm? So to despair in the storm? To start making plans to get out of the storm?

[ 27 : 44 ] Ding, ding, ding. You got to take control. You have agency. There is no problem in life where you have no agency. Even though you might think you have the most minunest part of agency or will, even the ability to take it to God to give you a supernatural patience, you have that.

Take a look at verse 5. It says, then the mariners were afraid. And it says, and each cried out to his God.

That seems rational, right? We might even respect that gesture. prayer. But ultimately, we know a prayer to a dead God, a God that does not exist, is an empty prayer.

It doesn't matter how sincere that prayer is. Their God actually offers no assurances. And tragically, the assurance it offers in life, which are none, none, are the same assurances that it offers in death.

None. It's simply a great fear of the unknown. No matter how stoically someone approaches the unknown, it's still of no consequence.

[ 29 : 14 ] Fearful people do useless, fruitless things. Then they continue into the third part. We react through organized religion.

Verse 5, and each cried out to its God. What's interesting, you had to understand this, the ship full of mariners was from people from all over the land.

Some could have been slaves, servants, different nations. They would have all served different gods. And often they had these little things called totems, little carved pieces of rock or wood, and they would kind of wrap it around and it would kind of hang down.

Some of them would hang from their neck. And they would kind of hold that. That's where they're hoping to get God's power. But what they're actually doing is they're just kind of spinning the gun like a Russian roulette, just hoping one of the chambers has the real God in it.

That, all right, if we get all 26 of us praying, someone's God might be the God that will help us. I don't know if it's my God. Did you offend your God?

[ 30 : 22 ] I don't know your God. I don't even know if I've offended my God. You, yes. So you're just trying to figure this out. Men do it all the time, right? We've heard the saying, there's no atheists in foxholes.

I remember one time just when I was in high school and we were at the provincial volleyball championships, which is a really big thing. So we're at the highest level, we're going in, we haven't lost a game, and we're playing a team that has on their team a kid who's already on the national volleyball team.

Okay, he was 6'8". I was the third tallest guy in my team. And I'm not even cracking 5'11". So all the defense in the world was not going to stop us from this guy and we got mowed down anyway.

But I remember the guys asking me if I would pray. What's interesting, they mocked me for my Christianity all the time. They bug me, you know, kind of chide me, you know, if you've ever hung out with guys in locker rooms.

Yeah, we do that. I bug them, they bug me. Yeah, I'm not going to pray. That's a useless man's prayer. The sailors aren't much different.

[ 31 : 37 ] They're doing what they think is best. They line up their idols and they start praying to an unknown God for an unknown offense that someone in there may have created.

So the fourth method we use for the storm, it's called secular wisdom or what's known as moral formation. We try to do good and wise things.

Verse 5, and they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. This is leadership, right? This is the captain making that decision.

Now, you needed to understand the sacrifice they were making. They were given a ship to deliver all those goods. If those goods don't get delivered, guess who owes on that bill?

The ship. For some of them, that would mean indentured servitude to whoever owns the cargo for the rest of their life.

[ 32 : 44 ] So when you get to the point of throwing the cargo off the boat, slavery or death, it's only one of the two.

But they think there's a possibility that they might survive. For us, we call it moral formation, right? We try to get it together on ourselves, on our steam.

You know what? I'm going to try to do really good now so I can somehow earn favor with God. I'm going to give more. You know what? I had some financial problems, so I'm going to get to a really strict budget, and I'm really going to work that budget perfectly.

It's like the guy who goes to the doctor, and as we all know, the doctors are the only people in the world with the carte blanche to insult us, right? Yep, you're overweight, your cholesterol's high, you need to work out, and nothing's changed for the last 20 years, BK.

Right? They're the only ones. They're just brutally honest with you. It's like my one friend said, you know, it's like you haven't changed in your health levels whatsoever between the last year.

[ 33 : 57 ] Well, I haven't changed anything. Right? And don't we approach that? We just hope and hope that new health test, everything's going to all of a sudden be so much better.

I switched over, you know, with the closing of Burger King, I have to meet Big Macs now, right? So maybe I'm getting a little bit healthier. No, it's not happening. See, what's happening is we might be able to do things for a season, but it doesn't address the spiritual root of the problem that exists in the deepest part of our heart.

It's like putting a band-aid on a broken leg. Yeah, you might be able to get your debts in order. You might be able to get your eating habits in order.

But the real root of the issue that drive you to the dependence on whether it be food or money or purchasing or buying still exists.

And if the storms of life have been designed by God, we still need to find God's way. This brings us to the fifth way people tend to deal with God when he calls them.

[ 35 : 23 ] The word of sleep there is the same word used with Adam when it said that God had laid him to sleep and removed a rib and created Eve next to him.

this is a deep sleep. This is the person who's in the storm, doesn't really care about the storm, but we see the storm, right?

There are certain people, you look around, it is just roaring around them. If you think I'm going to that eye of the hurricane, you are nuts. Who are these people?

Let me describe some of them to you. You might recognize one or two of them. If you are the parent who does not monitor what your children do online, you're the person with the storm in your life.

If you are taking no responsibility for the influences that are coming in from this world into your child's home, into your child's heart, guess what?

[ 36 : 50 ] Bingo, bango, bongo. They're going to be a completely different person than you thought they were. It's the parents that allows TVs and their peers to determine what is right and what is wrong.

Today we live in a world that is not godly by any shape, form, or matter and is trying to overwrite what God says, what is right and what is wrong.

There are people, there are industries fighting to influence your children. If you never taught your child wisdom or in the way of the Lord, I can guarantee you they're not going to learn it online.

If you're hoping, oh, I hope my child makes some really good decisions, better than I ever did, it's not going to be happening by watching TikTok. If your children are developing worldly habits now, there is no way they're going to figure things out later on their own.

What's another type of person? I know this one guy, he owns a business, it's hemorrhaging money, his employees are starting to leave and he makes the decision, I'm going to add to the debt, I'm going to buy that new top of the line Mercedes-Benz because that's going to inspire hope in my employees.

[ 38 : 20 ] We're doing better. It just had the opposite. The employees had no disrespect for the man and pretty much jettisoned that business and he went under.



It's funny, right? We just don't see the storms that we're in because we choose to sleep. Another businessman I know, multimillionaire, he decides to hire a personal assistant.

She is an exceptionally attractive woman and very flirtatious. And one of the employees knew him who worked, they were at the same church and he noticed she was touching him a lot and he saw his demeanor around him.

So this young man, just a young man in his young 20s, goes up to the multimillionaire and says, hey brother, I think this is going to be a trouble for you and your wife and your family. He fired the young guy and six months later the affair was revealed.

Everybody saw the storm, but the person in the storm. You see that sleep is a deep sleep.

[ 39 : 37 ] It's a deceptive sleep. It's not a sleep that the person has been working so hard. It's a sleep that comes from running so hard from God.

We know the times when Jesus slept in the boat. Jesus slept in the boat because he was ministering for days on end and he would sleep. They run from the places where they are confronted.

They run from the places where there's turmoil. They run from the people who will speak truth to them. Probably one of the saddest stories that I saw is there was a family in our church that was going bankrupt.

So we had an accountant in our church and we went over and we brought hope. We're going to get some hope here. We're going to start breaking things down. We're going to help you out. And this guy was really great at this type of stuff.

So we sat down and he goes, all right, let's bring out your bills. bills. And the wife says, well, what do you mean the bills? I shred them as soon as they come in. Because she simply says it's the only way I can sleep at night.

[ 40 : 56 ] So for 29 days of the month, she sleeps really good until the day that the next bill arrives. And just having to explain to her, that doesn't make the debt disappear. In fact, it's making it more and more worse.

But she thinks just by sticking in the shredder, all is solved. Anybody been there? Right? Come on. There's stuff we avoid, people we avoid, problems we avoid, thinking that it's somehow mysteriously going to disappear.

My friends, this happens all the time. You think because you are asleep that all will be well.

Yet everyone sees it and everyone knows what is going on. The reason that Jonah sleeps and is idle is because he has what's called guilt-ridden weariness.

Because running from God is tiring. What happens is we tend to do whatever it takes to make ourselves better.

[ 42 : 14 ] He is both stubborn and deaf in his defiance. So what happens? Verse 6. So the captain came and said to him, what do you mean, you sleeper?

Arise, call out to your God. Perhaps the God will give a thought to us that we may not perish. So this is the captain. He knows something's going on.

Everybody's praying. Everybody's praying to their idols. Nothing's happening. Maybe there's someone on here with a God who has power. Can you imagine him being kicked as he gets up?

And he's getting a rebuke from a pagan captain. Anybody here been rebuked by an unbeliever? I thought you were a Christian.

Aren't you supposed to be loving? I have. It hurts. Aren't you being a little bit hypocritical there, BK? Yes.

[ 43 : 15 ] Yes. Yes. So what is the right way to face down these storms? Well, what we're finding out here is the storm isn't exactly getting through to Jonah.

So sometimes God uses other means to get his attention. And that's what we're going to learn about next week. If I had any parting words for you this morning, the storm is your friend.

Doesn't feel like a friend. But if it's God who's the one hurling that storm at you, that's because he has a great and jealous love for you.

And he wants you in that covenant relationship. We so often believe that it's God hates us.

God doesn't love us when in fact it's the complete opposite. Sometimes the storm is there to protect you from yourself.

[ 44 : 30 ] Next week, we're going to look at how God exposes us for who we are. The next part, they cast lots and the lots points to Jonah.

Who wants that public humiliation? But sometimes God does it. And we will have the inclination to go the other way.

Yet God beckons for us to follow his way. So my friend, if there is a storm in your life, maybe it's time to assess that.

Maybe that storm is there for you. And it's a storm that is sent by God. Maybe today is the day you make land.

Today is the day you make right with God. Today is the day you pray before the Lord. Maybe it's a matter of giving a part of your life to him or all of your life to him.

[ 45 : 33 ] But I'm going to tell you right now, there's no better place than being in the presence of the Lord. Amen. Let's pray. Dear Holy and Heavenly Father, we just look at this short book and it is so packed with life lessons for us.

Oh God, I pray that we hear it. Father, Father, storms hurt, they're painful. But at the same time, there are these loving actions done by you, which eventually will not only make us right with you, but it will enable us to do good works for you.

And it will bring about a lasting and greater fellowship between us. It's amazing that this is the Yahweh God, the personal God who's personally involved in our lives.

Father, as we go from this place for this week, may you give us spiritual eyes to see the world and the condition that it's in.

perhaps we need eyes to look at our own hearts, spiritual condition. Maybe we've been running from God, from his word, from his people.

[ 46 : 53 ] I don't know, but God, just as we learned in Psalm 131 that we read this morning, you know, our innermost thoughts. So, Father, I pray your blessing upon each and every person here, and that they would be working to fulfill the ministry that you have for them.

And may they be blessed accordingly. In your great, powerful name, Amen. Amen.