

8/29/2021 - Psalms 66 - "How Awesome is our God"

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[0 : 00] We're going to be continuing, or rather concluding, today our Summer in the Psalms. So this summer we've been looking through select scriptures in the second book of the Psalter, right?

From Psalm 42 through 70, I believe 72. And to conclude our look at the second book of the Psalter, we're going to be today looking at Psalm 66.

It's a little bit longer of a psalm, so we'll be covering 20 verses today, but I'll try to move through them in about 40 minutes if possible.

It may go a little bit longer. But I think this is a fitting psalm. I apologize, my microphone is scratching against my beard. But I think this is a fitting psalm to conclude our look at the Psalms. I think it's a triumphant shout of praise to an awesome God. And I think it brings together several of the themes that we've seen throughout this summer.

[1 : 02] And kind of works to conclude those ideas and to remind us of them. So expect to see some themes that you've heard this summer, and hopefully we can reinforce some of them.

But before we begin looking at this psalm, I was looking to find some examples to set our minds on the awesomeness of God.

And I'm just wondering, anyone here remember the moon landing? The first one. A couple of you guys, right? Was it awesome, would you say, watching it on TV if you got the chance?

Right? What about the Hubble Space Telescope? I wasn't quite there to witness it, but was that awesome as well once they fixed it? Right? A little bit later, they launched the International Space Station, right?

In my lifetime. I don't quite remember it. I was only eight years old at the time. But they've been working on it since, and it's pretty cool to see what it's become. But as science continues advancing, since 1997, they've been working on a new telescope called the James Webb Space Telescope.

[2 : 24] And they've been working on it since 1997 and testing it for the last four years. And later this year, in November, they're going to strap it to a rocket and shoot a \$10 billion telescope into space.

Right? And it's going to be deployed about a million miles out into space. And then it's going to be set up in one of the most complex arrangements that's been done in deep space to this point.

And I think that's pretty awesome. For me, anyway. I'm kind of a science geek, so I find it kind of exciting. But I imagine the engineers, the technicians who built this for the last 25 years, some of them have spent their entire career working on this one project, right?

And it's going to get launched into space. And it's going to be an exciting and terrifying day, I imagine, that quite a few engineers and project managers, scientists, maybe a few insurance agents are going to be praying to God for the first time in a while.

That all goes to plan, right? And I don't say this so that we might be in awe at what man is capable of, right? I'm more interested to see when they deploy this telescope, right, they're going to see deeper into space than anyone before them has ever seen.

[3 : 44] When they look out there, they're going to see what we think are about a billion trillion stars. Just a ridiculous number. Right?

200 billion galaxies. Some of them no one has ever seen. And hopefully, some of them will be moved to say, how awesome are the deeds of our God.

He put them there, those stars there, just to declare his awesomeness. Turn with me to Psalm 66. And let's read through it.

You want to turn in your ESV Bible. We should also have it on the screen there. But I'll go ahead and read it for us. It starts in verse 1. Shout for joy to God, all the earth. Sing the glory of his name.

Give to him glorious praise. Say to God, how awesome are your deeds. So great is your power. May your enemies come cringing to you.

[4 : 47] All the earth worships you and sings praises to you. They sing praises to your name. Come and see what God has done. He is awesome in his deeds towards the children of man.

He turned the sea into dry land. They passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations. Let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

Bless our God, O peoples. Let the sound of his praise be heard, who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our foot slip. For you, O God, have tested us. You've tried us as silver is tried. You brought us into the net. You laid a crushing burden on our backs. You let men ride over our heads. We went through fire and water, yet you have brought us to a place of abundance. I will come to you and to your house with burnt offerings.

I'll perform my vows to you, that which my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble. I will offer to you burnt offerings of fattened animals with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams. I will make an offering of bulls and goats.

[5 : 51] Come and hear all you who fear God and I will tell you what he has done for my soul. I cried to him with my mouth and high praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened, but truly God has listened.

He has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me. Question, are you in awe of God?

Let's pray before we begin. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for how your word exalts your name.

And we pray that as we search your word to know more of you, that we would be in awe of who you are and what you've done and that our praises would be heard.

Lord, guide us through this text. Give us eyes to see, ears to hear, Lord, to come before you in worship. In my first point, I want to look at the first couple of verses in which we are encouraged by the psalmist to come and see what God has done.

[7 : 06] So looking first at verses one through four, and I'll just reread them as a reminder. The psalmist says, shout for joy to God, all the earth, sing the glory of his name, give to him glorious praise.

Say to God, how awesome are your deeds. So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. All the earth worships you and sings praises to you. They sing praises to your name.

First of all, the psalmist is making an invitation right? He's calling all the earth to shout for joy to God, not just the children of Israel, the entire earth.

Not only is he calling them to sing, he's calling them to shout. This word shout is also translated as a war cry, a blast of the horn, a shout of applause, or perhaps a shout of triumph over enemies, right?

He's calling on the world to excitedly remember the awesome deeds of God. And so he calls them to sing, give glory to his name, give glorious praise to the one who deserves it.

[8 : 15] If you look back at the psalm just before Psalm 66, the last verse of Psalm 65, David says, the entire creation, the meadows and hills shout and sing together for joy.

And now, as we move into Psalm 66, the psalmist is calling us, the earth, God's created people, to shout for joy at his name.

I think it's pretty awesome to think that this is an invitation to worship and to praise, not just to the children of Israel, but to all the earth, to remember his awesome deeds, to remember the salvation of his people.

And also a call to bow down before God, an act of worship, of humble submission before the glorious name of God. This reminds me of Moses' song, the song of Moses in Exodus 15.

He says in verse 13 and 14, you have led in your steadfast love the people who you have redeemed. You have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

[9 : 20] The peoples have heard. They trembled. Pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia, right? When the world witnessed God's mighty deliverance, Israel's enemies came cringing before him.

They came to him seeking peace and they feared his divine nature and his eternal power. And so the people of God, they rejoiced as their enemies' hearts melted before God.

He subdued great nations before them. Now when we examine the world around us, we may not come to this same conclusion, right?

We don't always see God's enemies come cringing before him, at least not in the way that Israel did then. We know that they plot together in vain against God.

They war against God. The entire earth wars against God. But we also know from Romans 14, right, that every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.

[10:28] And so despite the hardness of rebellious hearts, the psalmist is extending a call. All the earth should fear God. Come before him in worship, in joyous praise.

Come humbly before him while salvation may be found. Let's look at the next couple of verses.

Verse 5 of Psalm 66 reads, Come and see what God has done.

He is awesome in his deeds towards the children of man. He turned the sea into dry land. They passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations.

Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Here, the psalmist is inviting us to come and see what God has done, right?

For us, as we read his scripture, for them, as they witness his awesome power. If the world wasn't convinced yet by God's divine nature and his eternal power, let them be convinced by his awesome deeds.

[11:38] The world witnessed as he brought his people out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea on dry land, how he led them through the wilderness, how he did not take his steadfast love from them.

How they crossed the Jordan and how he conquered all their enemies before them. And so the world is called to worship. More than that, God's salvation was done for all to see.

He redeemed his people. He displayed his deeds so that all the world would come and worship before him, right? Unless the rebellious are tempted to again exalt themselves, the psalmist concludes this passage with a warning.

God rules by his might forever and keeps eyes, keeps watch on the nations. Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. I think for us today, it can be difficult to be in awe of crossing the Red Sea.

Maybe not for you. Maybe you can picture what that would have looked like. Maybe you've seen the movies or the animated movie of what that looked like, but I don't think we can fully grasp the magnitude, the awesomeness of God parting the sea, miles of water on both sides as they walked through on dry land led by a pillar of fire, right?

[13:04] God crushed the mighty armies of Egypt behind them. He displayed his awesome deeds for all to see. The words come and see what God has done.

They're also a reminder that God truly desires that all come to him, bow before him and worship him. This is not just a New Testament idea.

God called the world to come before him from the beginning. I think an example we find in the story of Rahab, right?

Just after Israel crosses the wilderness and comes to Jericho and sends spies into the land, Rahab recalls what God had done. Perhaps she didn't witness the Red Sea herself 40 years ago, but she knew the story.

She feared God and so she came before him for salvation. And what came of her? Her and her family were saved. While all Jericho was destroyed, right?

[14:13] They were given the opportunity for salvation and yet they exalted themselves. God offers this same salvation to all the earth.

The earth truly is without excuse before God. He's been clearly visible since the beginning. The rebellious are warned, do not exalt yourself.

You will come cringing before God. One way or another, you will bow before him. Come to him while salvation may be found.

Isaiah 55, 6. As we move into our second point, we see that although the earth may not willingly rejoice before God, the children of God are called to bless our God.

And so this will be my second point. Bless our God, O peoples. Let's look at verses 8 through 12 in Psalm 66. Bless our God, O peoples. Let the sound of his praise be heard who has kept your soul among the living and has not let your foot slip, feet slip, our feet slip.

[15 : 28] For you, O God, have tested us. You've tried us as silver is tried, dried. You've brought us into the net. You've laid a crushing burden on our backs. You've let men ride over our heads.

We went through fire and through water, yet you've brought us out to a place of abundance. These words here, they slowed me down a bit this week as I was studying this psalm.

We see first that the people of God lift the sound of praise for all the earth to hear. Why do they do this? Because he's kept our souls among the living.

He's not let our foot slip. The Lord who keeps Israel, as Gary Frost said a few weeks ago, he neither sleeps nor slumbers. He will not let our foot be moved.

God tested his people. He tried them and refined them as silver is refined. He brought them into the net of captivity in Egypt. He told them long before this happened that it would happen, that they would spend 420 years in Egypt and that he would rescue them.

[16 : 38] He willed it before it took place. He laid a crushing burden on their back with clay and straw and sometimes just clay. They made brick after brick and built Egypt as slaves.

He allowed his people to be oppressed under the crushing burden of Egypt. but he led them through fire and he led them through water. And so the psalmist says, Bless our God, O people. Five times in this passage, right, the psalmist says, It was you, O God. He recognizes it was God's plan for them to go through these trials.

As we read through these psalms, the second book of the Psalter, we learn, we learn, not just in one psalm, but throughout them, that when we're tried and we face suffering, we should be moved to lament.

We should be moved to ask God, Why do I face these trials? What are you teaching me? How are you refining me? How does this bring you glory? The psalmist, when he reflected on God's goodness, he found that God personally watched over them in the trials.

[17 : 57] He appointed their trials with a purpose, a purpose they can trust was good. There was no moment, as the psalmist saw, when his people, when God's people, were outside of God's hands, outside of his protection or his blessing.

Rather, God personally refined his people and brought them out of the iron furnace of Egypt so that all the earth could see the awesome deeds of God.

It was he alone who brought them to the place of abundance. He redeemed a people for himself. And lest we not be in awe of these words, remember that the children of God were brought out of Egypt through the wilderness.

He sustained more than a million people for 40 years, supplying their every need, their food, their clothes, their water, everything. He parted miles of water so that they could pass through on dry land.

He led them through decades of war, giving them victory as he saw fit. He brought them into a place of abundance in the lifetime of David and Solomon where every enemy came cringing before them.

[19 : 14] From a single family, Abraham, he redeemed a people for himself. Even if you've been a Christian for a long time, do you rejoice and bless God when tried by fire and water?

Imagine for a moment you're one of the Christians trapped in Afghanistan, right? You've made every effort to find your way out on a plane, but instead you face captivity and persecution.

Realizing what you face, would you bless God and sing praises to his name? If your hope is in this world and the things you have in this world, when you face trial and those things are burned up, why would you praise a God who allows, rather, who wills for his people to suffer?

I'll circle back to the question, but first, I want to think for a minute about silver. God said that he tried his people as silver is tried.

I don't know if anyone in here smelt silver, but perhaps you know, perhaps you've purchased silver, that it can be purified by refining it multiple times.

[20 : 47] It's melted and the heavier elements sink to the bottom, the lighter elements float to the surface and they're removed, and then this process can be continued. In the biblical times, it may have been continued seven times to receive purified silver, but even if you continue this process 70 times, you can't get better than 99.99% pure silver.

Even with all of our modern efforts, you cannot make pure silver, right? So look with me at the words of God through Isaiah the prophet in Isaiah 48, verse 10.

Behold, I have refined you. Not as silver, I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake I do it.

For how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another. From this, we find that we're not refined by fiery trials to purify our righteousness. We're refined through the furnace of affliction to reveal his righteousness. You may say, wait, how is the furnace of affliction better than being refined by fire?
[22 : 19] Right? Why would we rejoice at those words, the furnace of affliction? Because we don't stay in the furnace.

Our story doesn't end in the furnace. God has brought us out into a place of abundance, a place where we are made pure. We're made pure by Christ, by his sacrifice, by his atoning blood, by faith in him. We receive pure righteousness before God.

We come to a place of eternal abundance and he alone receives the glory. So to answer the question, why would you praise a God who allows, who wills for his own people to suffer? And I'll give you seven reasons. They're all connected. First, because you count all things as loss when compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus.

[23 : 26] As Philippians 3 says, because you share with Christ in his sufferings and you become like Christ in his death. Through suffering, he reveals the righteousness that comes from God and depends on faith so that you may know him.

Three, because you know that trials reveal the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold. And because the tested genuineness of your faith, brings praise and glory and honor to Christ, 1 Peter 1, 6-7.

Because through trials, God produces steadfastness, James 1-2. He produces endurance, he produces character, he produces hope, faith in the things hoped for, and conviction of things not seen.

and as Peter says in the next few verses, although you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

so finally, seventh reason, praise him because you are in awe, in awe that the same God before who nations come cringing and all the earth worships, showed his love for you that even when you were dead in your sins, he died for you.

[25 : 06] when you face trials, remember, he's in the fire with you. He keeps your soul among the living, he does not let your foot slip, he brings you out to a place of abundance.

Shout for joy to God all the earth, sing the glory of his name, give to him glorious praise. As we move into the next few verses in my third point, I want to look at how the psalmist responds to this truth and look at what it means to perform our vows.

As we continue reading verses 13 through 15, the psalmist says, I will come into your house with burnt offerings. I will perform my vows to you, that which my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.

I will offer to you burnt offerings of fattened animals with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams. I will make an offering of bulls and goats. Now, when the psalmist was in trouble, when he was tried, he made a vow to God that if he should make it through this trial, he would do something for God. Specifically, he would make a sacrifice to God. And so, he made it through the trial, and now he declares that he will make good on his promises. He will offer his burnt offering.

[26 : 37] This reminds me of the story of Martin Luther, right? I don't know if you're familiar with it, but supposedly he was struck by lightning. It didn't hit him directly, but it knocked him to the ground.

And in fear, he vowed to God that he would become a monk. And becoming a monk was many years of trials, if you've read his story.

But through those trials, he found faith, in Romans 1, 17. And through faith, he established the reformation, right? Reforming the church.

I think vows like this have become cliché. We see them used too often in the movies, as if we give something to God, and in return, he spares our life.

But vows weren't necessarily forbidden in the Old Testament. If you look at Deuteronomy 23, verses 21 and 22, the Bible makes clear that any delay in fulfilling our vows was sin before God.

[27 : 39] If we make a promise to God, whether he asks it of us or not, we are bound to keep that promise. Otherwise, it is sin. And so in the next verse, he says, if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of sin, right?

He makes it simple. If you're not going to keep your vow, don't make a vow. It's not sin to not make a vow. And although we often make vows carelessly, that we have no intention or capability of keeping, genuine vows have a purpose.

And so we see them throughout the Old Testament. One example that I find encouraging is when Jacob in Genesis 28, when God reveals himself to Jacob through a dream, he says, how awesome is God?

And he makes a vow to God that if God will do all that he promised through him to Abraham and to Isaac, then he will be his God. God will be the God of Jacob.

And who does God call himself? The God of Jacob. God made good on all of his promises, and Jacob kept his vow.

[28 : 54] Within his vow, he also promised to give a tenth of all that he had to God. And so God blessed him so that he might keep those vows. Now, vows are not as common in the New Testament, but that doesn't mean they've ceased to exist.

I think an analog to vows for us in the New Testament is a prayer of petition. And you may not often pray like this, but that didn't stop David from praying like this in the Psalms, right?

Paraphrasing, he might have said, O God, deliver me from this current trial so that I may continue glorifying your name. I would God delight to rescue you from your trial so that you might go on glorifying his name.

In your prayer of petition, you vow to obey his will. He saves you that you may go on obeying his will. We might also pray, Father, provide for this current need so that I may continue exalting your name.

That's one way we could think about the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6, right? Why would he forgive us our sins? Why would he keep us from evil?

[30 : 11] Why would he provide our needs so that his will is done in earth as it is in heaven, so that his kingdom comes and so that we exalt his name? In Psalm 66, 14, the psalmist prayed a petition for deliverance and made a vow for sacrifice.

And now we see that he keeps every word of his vow. He comes before the Lord to make sacrifices of rams and bulls and goats. And if you study burnt sacrifices, burnt offerings in Leviticus, which I'm not going to go there now, you see that these offerings were fully consumed before God, everything.

No part was kept back for food for the priest or for the one making the offering. And so it's called a sacrifice because it's of great cost.

Not only does he give the excess of what he has, he gives the fattened animals the first fruit of his flock. He gives it joyously to God. Out of the abundance, he makes a sacrifice, not an obligatory offering.

To make a burnt offering required faith, required going beyond a portion, required him to trust in God's provision. He gave the best of what he had because he trusted that the Lord would again show him salvation.

[31 : 36] Think about Abraham, right? Overused story, but still full of truth when he was called to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering consumed before the Lord.

Doesn't really make sense in light of the fact that child sacrifices were forbidden by God, but that didn't stop Abraham from obeying the word of God, from bringing Isaac and preparing him as a sacrifice before the Lord God, all the while trusting and believing that God would provide another way.

And having tested Abraham's faith and seeing that he was faithful, he provided another way. He provided a sacrifice so that Abraham could bless the Lord.

And so he named the place God will provide. Right? Truly a sacrifice to God. When we make a sacrifice to God, it's not about giving something to God.

God, it's not about repaying God for something that he did. I like the words of God to Job in 41.11 of the book of Job.

[32 : 48] He said, Who has first given to me that I should repay him? Whatever is under heaven, the whole heaven, whatever is under the whole heaven is mine. Right?

We're reminded that no amount of burnt offering, no amount of sacrifice is sufficient as an exchange for our deliverance. If we believe that, we have it out of order. The psalmist has nothing to offer God.

All of his possessions already belong to God. He's not negotiating. Martin Luther shouldn't have been negotiating with God for deliverance or for paying off debt for his rescue. Rather, in his sacrifice, he's rejoicing that God has kept his soul among the living. And so he rejoices by offering, burnt offering, sacrificing. By lifting high his praise and his thanksgiving before God.

Through these prayers, through our sacrifices, we simply offer to God our faith in his provision and our praise for his abundance. Through sacrifice, we testify that all things in this life and world are lost compared to the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ.

[34 : 01] Christ. When we pray, when we keep our vows, we're showing that God provides more abundantly than all that we could ever ask or think, as he says in Ephesians 3.20.

Now, don't accuse me of preaching the prosperity gospel, but I believe these words to be true. Malachi 3.10, God says, bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

When we give to God in faith, we trust that no matter the outcome, that he will keep us. The psalmist doesn't place faith in his possessions.

He doesn't grow complacent in his abundance that he has in this time, but instead he places faith in God, in the abundance of God. And so his sacrifice, our sacrifice, is a testimony of faith, an act of obedience.

We will offer to God all that we vow, because even if we should again face trial, persecution, famine, captivity, we testify that God alone is sufficient for us in this hour.

[35 : 27] And so we praise him. How awesome are your deeds towards the children of man. My fourth and final point, I want to look at verses 16 through 20.

And I'm going to title this point, Come and Hear What God Has Done. But in case we got lost in the last 15 verses, I want to summarize them for you, right?

In the first part, God called all the earth to shout for joy and sing for praise. In the second part, he calls the children of Israel to come and see what he has done.

He then calls them to bless God, to let the sound of their praise be heard. He called them to worship because of his deeds. Now as we get to the final point, we're called to come and hear what God has done.

And the structure I think of this psalm is very intentional. It starts with all the earth. And then it focuses on the children of Israel. And now it focuses on the individual.

[36 : 37] What will he do having reflected on the awesomeness of God? Let's look at verses 16 through 20 of Psalm 66. Come and hear all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul.

I cried to him with my mouth and high praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened, but truly God has listened. He's attended to the voice of my prayer.

Blessed be God because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me. What is it that God has done that we are to come in here?

He has heard my prayer. He has sustained me by his steadfast love. When I offered my petition, my prayer to him, when I offered high praise, he listened and he delivered me.

Now I think there are four important points to what the psalmist says, and he says, come and hear all who fear God, so I want to hear what he had to say. First, in the first part of verse 17, he says that he cried out and lifted his prayer to God.

[37 : 45] He made his prayer known to God. Right? He allowed his prayer to overflow into praise. In the second part of verse 17, and then in verse 18, he says that he did not cherish sin in his heart, and so God attended his ear.

He listened to and he answered my prayer. Right? Why did God listen? Well, if we follow the logic, we might say because he prayed, because he offered high praise, and because he did not cherish iniquity in his heart.

But instead, in verse 20, what does the psalmist conclude? He says, blessed be God because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me.

He gives the glory to God, not to himself for his righteousness, not to himself for his praise, not to himself for his prayer. He gives the glory to God who heard his prayer.

And so he stands in awe of God, that the God of Israel, the God who does awesome deeds, would turn his attention, that he would tune his ear to the psalmist's prayer.

[39 : 04] And so he calls all who will listen and tells us to be in awe of God's steadfast love. Now, I don't think we should ignore the truth in this prayer, right?

God does indeed close his ear to those who cherish sin, to those who cherish iniquity in their heart, those who live in sin. He will not turn his ear to our petitions.

That doesn't mean he won't turn his ear to our cry for mercy and our cry for forgiveness when we confess and come before him. But we must first come to him, confess, and turn from our sins if we expect that he will turn his ear to hear our petitions.

And also, we must not neglect to pray, right? How often do we tell ourself, well, God knows what I need before I ask him.

Those are Jesus' words. They must be true. But he's also blessed us abundantly with prayer, with communion with God. What does that really mean?

[40 : 11] That means that God himself turns his ear to your prayer, and he delights to answer you in your hour of need. James said, we do not have because we do not ask.

We do not receive because we ask wrongly. if we do not humble ourselves before God and ask according to his will, he won't answer.

But he delights to answer us when we come humbly before him and ask. Jesus says, ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. And the psalmist says in Psalm 50 verse 15, call upon me in the day of trouble.

I will deliver you and you will glorify me. Be in awe that God not only pours out his abundant steadfast love on Israel, on his church, but that he personally attends himself to your prayers. When you lift your prayer, he turns his ear to you. You have access, rather, to the undivided attention of God.

[41 : 27] When you cry out, he turns his face to you, and he delights to answer your prayer. Before we close, look at Psalm 65 verse 5.

Just in the previous psalm, David says, by awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation, the hope of all the earth, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the furthest seas.

Indeed, how awesome is our God. As we conclude, I just want to remind you that not only is he awesome towards us, his children, but he's awesome towards all who will come to him.

When Solomon dedicated the temple before the Lord, he lifted up a prayer of dedication, and it's recounted in 2 Chronicles 6, and I'm just going to look at two verses, verse 32 and 33.

He says, Likewise, when a foreigner who is not of your people Israel comes from a far country, for the sake of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm, when he comes and prays toward this house, hear from heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you as do your people Israel.

[42 : 51] to summarize God's work of salvation in his people, his mighty deeds of deliverance, call the earth to worship, they call every knee to bow, every tongue to praise his great name.

He desires, he truly desires that all would come before him in repentance and faith, and he works through the lives of his people, through our prayers and our praise, through our sufferings and our trials, through our vows and our sacrifice, to display his love, his steadfast love for all to see, for all who thirst.

And so, rejoice when you're tried like silver, rejoice when your foot does not slip, praise him when you're brought into the place of abundance, praise him when the momentary afflictions of this life give way to the eternal weight of glory that is beyond all comparison.

And as you wait for that day, lift up your prayers, trust that he hears you, he turns his ear to the sound of your prayer, and lift the sound of your highest praise for all to hear.

Be in awe of God and tell all the earth of his awesome deeds towards the children of man. Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[44 : 17] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.