

O.T. Top Hits

CLOUDS IN THE CHURCH: CRAIG REES

When God Interrupts Worship



1 Kings 8

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Worship
within
the Cloud

The priests could not perform their services
because of the cloud, for the glory of the
Lord filled his temple.

1 Kings 8:11

Cloud עָנָן anan

a cloud mass, cloud, cloud(s), cloudy,
heavy mist

This is **“the cloud”** not “a cloud.”

This is not a natural formation but a supernatural transformation of a physical space with God’s presence.

Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long.

Exodus 14:19-20

While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the Lord appearing in the cloud.

Exodus 16:10

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

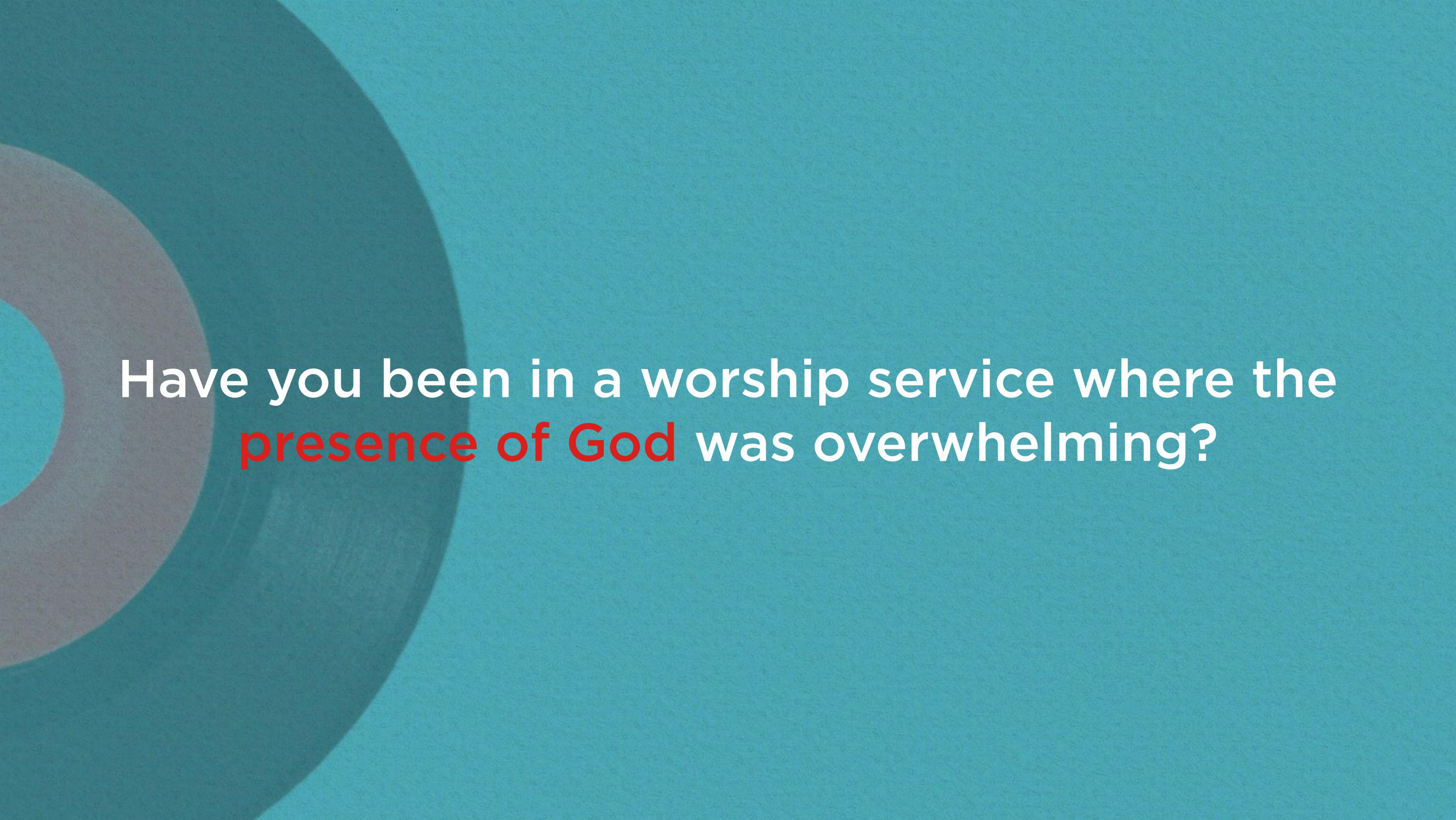
Exodus 40:34-35

While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him." When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

Luke 9:34-36

The fear the disciples' experienced is fear of the divine presence. The same verb ... is used of the cloud that covered the tabernacle in Exodus 40:35 and made it impossible for Moses to enter.

J. Nolland, Luke 9:21-18:34, p. 501.



Have you been in a worship service where the
presence of God was overwhelming?



Worship
under
the Cloud

Then Solomon said, “The Lord has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud;”

1 Kings 8:12

Dark Cloud עֲרָפֶל araphel

cloud, heavy cloud, deep darkness,
gloom, gloomy, thick cloud, thick
darkness, thick gloom

The araphel is a thick darkness that **masks** God's glory and permits approach. Normally, the Lord **dwells** in a dark cloud, where humanity cannot see him. Yet, on this occasion, the Lord comes near...



Consider the implications of the Lord's '**dark presence**' for our own worship?



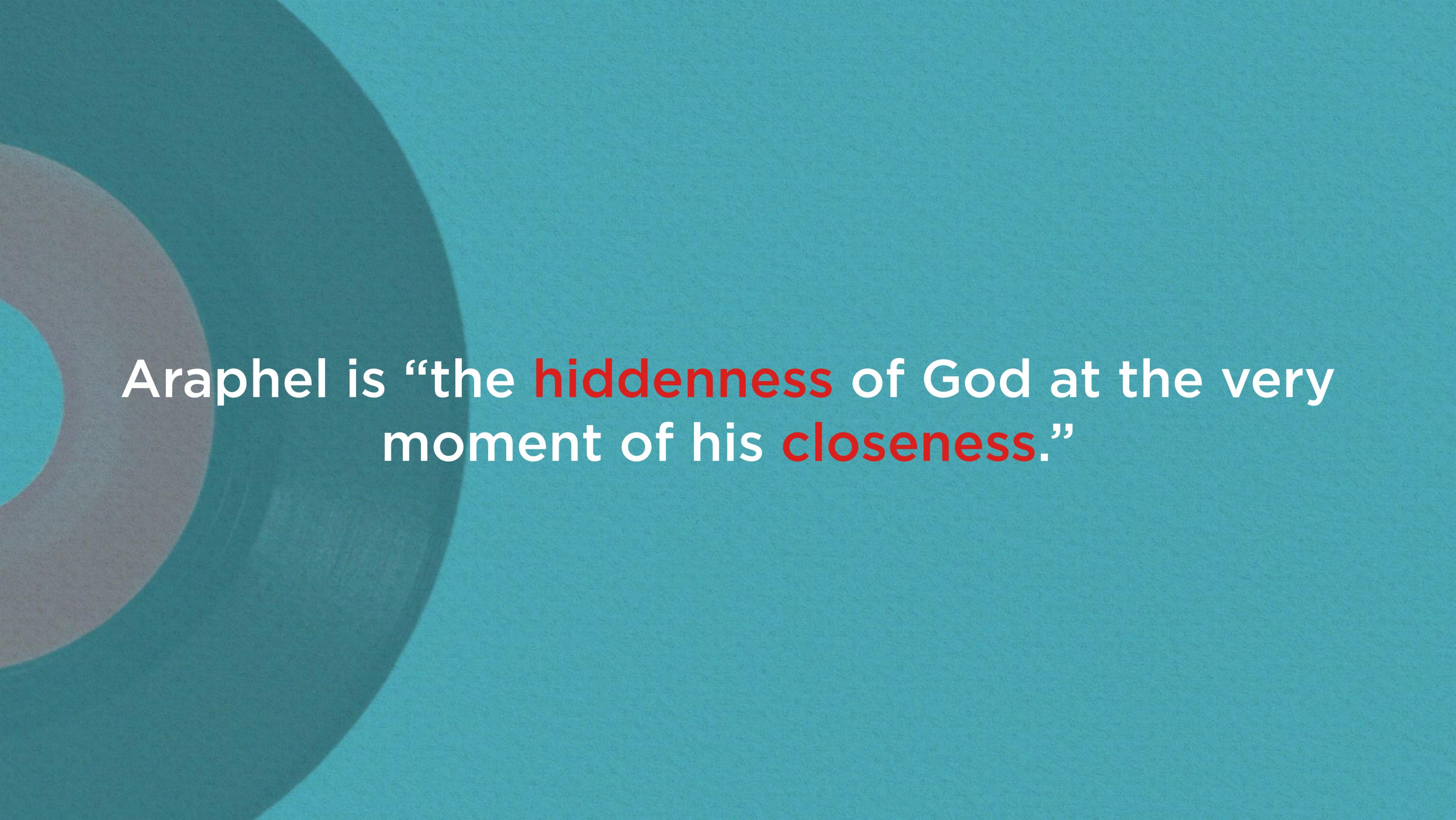
Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

Psalm 97:2

The Lord said to Moses, “I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you.” Then Moses told the Lord what the people had said.

Exodus 19:9

Have you ever been in a worship service wondering if you've done something wrong, feeling that God has **abandoned** you, sensing that you have lost your way and may never find it again? Have you ever **worshipped** under a cloud?



Araphel is “the **hiddenness** of God at the very moment of his **closeness.**”