

The Prayer of Jonah

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Date: 07 June 2020

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[0 : 0 0] Welcome to our services today and as we come together around the Word of God, we'll seek that the Lord would be pleased to add his blessing to the proclamation of his Gospel.

Let us unite together in prayer. Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we give thanks unto thee that thou hast brought us together at this hour around thine own Word, that living Word.

And we pray, O Lord, that through thine own Holy Spirit, that thou would apply thy Word to our hearts, in opening our understanding and our hearts to receive thy Word.

And we pray, O Lord, that it may bring forth evidence in our lives, that as we go about our daily work at home and in our workplace and in our community, that we would be lights that would be shining in the midst of the darkness that there is around us, that we may be found true and faithful witnesses for thee.

And we pray, O Lord, that thou would unite us together as members of the body of Christ, that we would love one another, that we would bear one another's burdens, that we would forgive one another, that we all may be like-minded, and that our goal would be Jesus Christ, to honour him, and to show forth his love, his mercy, and his compassion, not only in the way that we treat one another, but that we would extend that love, mercy, mercy, and compassion to those who are still outside of Christ, that they may,

[2 : 4 1] O Lord, see Christ in us, that they may be drawn to inquire, and we pray, O Lord, that through the Gospel, that they may find Christ as their own personal Saviour, that he would become Lord of all, for them as he has become for thy people.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless our nation. Remember as we pray thee at this time. Bring healing, we pray thee, not only physically, but spiritually.

And we pray, O Lord, that thy name may be uplifted, magnified, and glorified. We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless those who are ill, bless those who mourn, bless those who feel lonely, who may feel isolated at this time.

We pray, O Lord, that thine own nearness would be their portion, especially those who are of the household of faith, that they may have that confidence in thine own promise, that thou wilt never leave nor forsake those who are thine.

For thou hast redeemed them with the precious blood of thy Son, and thou art ever mindful of their needs. And we give thanks, O Lord, that today, by faith, that we can draw out of the riches of thy grace through Jesus Christ.

[4 : 1 4] Remember the Christless. O Lord, draw near to them, stir them in their hearts, make them to see their slippery paths.

And we pray, O Lord, that they may come to embrace Jesus Christ and to know thine own salvation. Bless us, we pray thee, as we come together around thy word.

And all that we ask for the forgiveness of our many sins, is in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. We shall now read the word of God as we find it in the Old Testament, in the book of Jonah, and chapter 2.

Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me, out of the belly of hell cried I.

And thou heardst my voice. For thou hast cast me into the deep in the midst of the seas, and the floods compassed me about. All thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

[5 : 28] Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul. The depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

I went down to the bottoms of the mountains, the earth with their bars were about me forever. Yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.

When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord. that my prayer came unto thee and to thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

But I will sacrifice unto thee with a voice of thanksgiving. I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. And let us return again to this chapter as we seek the Lord's blessing to be with us as we come to meditate upon the whole chapter.

[6 : 51] We read here at the beginning that Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly and said, I cried by raising of mine affliction unto the Lord. And he heard me out of the belly of hell, cried I, and thou heardst my voice.

So far in our study we have accepted that this is a true historical account. There is no doubt about the reality and truthfulness of this book.

Jonah was a prophet. However, his prophetic ministry is unique in that it is only from a very brief comment that we have in the book of Kings and chapter 14 that we know anything about his prophetic ministry.

But as we noted, this book is more than about a man being swallowed up by a great fish. it is a narrative that is about God. It brings our attention to the sovereignty of God, that God clearly controls all events, that he is working out everything in accordance to his own purpose.

In this book, God is everywhere. It is God who sent the storm. It was God that made the heathen lot to fall on Jonah, and it was God who prepared the fish to swallow Jonah.

[8 : 20] It was God who made the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land, and so on. But the book also brings our attention to God's grace, and God's mercy, and God's steadfast love.

Jonah was commissioned by God to go outside of Israel, to go to the Gentiles, to go to the heathen city of Nineveh, and there to cry out against it for their wickedness.

Now, it was a breathtaking commission. He was commanded to go and preach, and to seek to bring a people to repentance, who were the enemies of his own nation, Israel.

The Lord's commissioned to call a people to repentance is never easy. Jesus told his disciples that he was sending them out like sheep among wolves.

Now, here in the commission that he has given to Jonah, we would expect that the next line would read that Jonah got up and went, but instead we read that he got up to flee.

[9 : 38] he went down to Joppa, found a ship going to Tarshish, paid the fare and boarded the ship. No sooner had they left than a great storm blew up.

The storm was fierce so much so that those experienced sailors were full of fear for their own lives. By and by, when all else failed, they decided to draw lots to see who was to blame for the storm, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

After some questioning, Jonah came clean and confessed his true identity and the reason why he was found on board the ship, which resulted in instilling more fear into the sailors.

And then he told them, take me up and cast me forth into the sea, so shall the sea be calm unto you, for I know that for my sake this great temptation is upon you.

We are not sure of Jonah's mindset at this time in regard to his request to the sailors to throw him overboard.

[10 : 48] It would not seem that he had received any revelation from God. Some say that he wanted to remove himself from action.

In other words, the Ninevites would not receive the warning, and Nineveh's destruction would be certain, Jonah would drown, the sailors would survive and Nineveh would hear no warning.

Others say that he had the survival of the sailors in his mind, for he knew that he was responsible for the storm. But what is interesting here is that Jonah did not blame God for the storm.

There is no resentment towards God. Jonah acknowledges that he is facing the real consequences of his sin of disobedience.

Instead of blaming or resentment, he turns on himself. He turns on his own sin. For I know that for my sake, this great temptation is upon you.

[11 : 54] You know, what we find is that often when tragedy occurs or trials come upon people, in general, they are ready to blame God.

They respond with resentment towards God. Instead of turning into themselves and acknowledging their sin, they blame God and show their resentment towards God.

God. But here we find that Jonah acknowledges that it was God who had cast him into the sea. For we read, for thou hast cast me into the deep, in the midst of the sea.

He acknowledges that it was the sovereign hand of God. And he brings no accusation against the justice of God. He brings no accusation against God.

There is no resentment towards God. It is as if Jonah is saying to the Lord, you are just and you are right. This is what I deserve for my sin.

[12 : 58] And this is what people find so difficult to acknowledge, what their sins deserve. When you tell anyone that sin deserves God's condemnation and God's wrath, then it is so difficult for people to accept that.

But here we find a man and he acknowledges that he is receiving what his sins deserve, that he is receiving what his sin of disobedience deserve.

But whatever his mindset was when he ordered to be cast into the sea, it causes the sailors a bit of dilemma. They did not want to be guilty of this man's destruction.

destruction. So they started rowing towards the shore, but unable to row to shore. Then the sailors cry on the name of the Hebrew God. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood, for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

After which they throw Jonah into the sea. As far as the sailors were concerned, Jonah drowned.

[14 : 26] It is remarkable what is recorded of the action of the sailors, probably as soon as they reached port. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and made vows.

these sailors were Gentiles, and here is God's prophet running away from preaching to the great heath and Gentile city of Nineveh, and yet in God's providence, his first fruits were possibly Gentiles.

It was not unknown to God how Jonah would respond to his commission. God knew that Jonah would be reluctant to go, that he would go down the path of disobedience, but here is the sovereignty of God.

He uses Jonah, a disobedient servant, to bring heathen Gentile sailors to sacrifice to the Lord and make vows. Now, we are not at all in any way commending Jonah for his disobedience, but what we are commending to you is the sovereignty of God who is in control of all things.

Here he is bringing good out of his servants disobedience. Now, at this point in chapter 1, 16, the narrative about the sailors is rounded up.

[15 : 52] We don't hear anything else about them. But what about Jonah? Jonah is thrown overboard. He is left in the sea to drown.

And having been thrown into the sea and now recorded for us is how the Lord rescued Jonah and how Jonah responded. For we read, now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.

And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. here again we see God in action.

God sent the storm and how God prepared a great fish to swallow up his disobedient servant. We are not told how long Jonah was in the water after he was hurled overboard, but from what follows in this chapter, his rescue doesn't seem to have been immediate, given the reference to drowning that we have in verse 5 and 6 where we read, the waters compassed me about, even to the soul, the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head, I went down to the bottoms of the mountains, the earth without barge was about me forever.

However, the Lord made provision to rescue Jonah from a watery grave. We have no reason to suppose that the Lord created some new sea creature to rescue Jonah, rather he directed one of his already created sea creatures that was in the right place at the right time, and that sea creature acted in the specific way that the Lord required him to do so.

[17 : 51] And that should not really surprise us. In Psalm 147 we read that the Lord is in control of every aspect of his created realm.

He telleth the number of the stars, he calleth them all by their names, great is our Lord and of great power, his understanding is infinite.

The Lord rescued Jonah by means of a great fish, fish, the Hebrew word is not specific, it just means a great fish or a great sea creature. The fact that Jonah was swallowed up by this great fish and was inside the fish three days and three nights and survived has proved to be an obstacle for many to accepting this narrative as true and historic.

Many turned to other incidents in which individuals have been swallowed up by fish and survived for longer or shorter periods. But for me and you today the fact that Jesus himself had no doubts about the history of Jonah and the events that we have recorded here for us is sufficient to accept this as true history.

in fact we see how Jesus was able to draw the parol with his own death and resurrection. In Matthew chapter 12 we read for us Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

[19 : 23] However the contemporaries of Jonah were not able or in a position to say that Jonah's experience parallel to what the Messiah to come would have to undergo.

Nevertheless there are various important truths that are set before them. They would have understood the heinous of disobedience to God's will.

They would have understood that death was the appropriate penalty for this. They would have understood that God is able to rescue from death. That his grace and mercy are capable of upsetting even the most appalling of sins.

And these are important lessons for us all to learn. The heinousness of disobedience to God's will. And that death is the appropriate penalty.

And yet at the same time we have to understand that God is able to rescue us from what our sins deserve. that his grace and mercy are capable of upsetting even the most appalling of sins.

[20 : 34] However far we have gone in a sinful path, yet the grace and the mercy of God is capable of upsetting even the most appalling of sins.

that the grace and mercy of God can meet with us. Although the sea had become calm, we find Jonah and he is splashing and struggling under the sea, about to drown.

He himself feeling as having been abandoned by God, when all of a sudden he is swallowed up by a sea creature or a great fish. Jonah had no hesitation to see this as the hand of God.

Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord, his God, out of the fish's belly. The writer of this narrative interestingly wants us to observe that Jonah prayed unto the Lord, whose God.

Though Jonah had been acting in disobedience, nevertheless the Lord had his own ways of bringing his wayward, rebellious, disobedient servant back to himself, even using a storm and a great fish.

[21 : 58] You know, the means that the Lord uses to bring us back to himself may at times be very unpleasant, but it is always done in loving kindness.

Here we are told that Jonah remembered his relationship with God. Jonah prayed unto the Lord, his God.

It is interesting that this is now where we are told that Jonah prayed, for up to this point Jonah had not been praying, even when the ship master implored him, what meanest thou, O sleeper, arise, call upon thy God, God.

If so be that God will think upon us that we perish not. We are not told that Jonah prayed, but now inside the fish's belly Jonah prayed, an amazing prayer chamber, but one prepared by God for his servant.

servant. Sometimes it needs the chamber of affliction to bring us to pray to God.

[23 : 14] Sometimes it is in the furnace that we have been brought to pray to God. Yes, this was an amazing prayer chamber, but one prepared by God for his servant.

And you know, sometimes when we go through the furnace, furnace prepared by God for his servant, in order to bring us to this place where Jonah is brought, to acknowledge God as his God, to remember his relationship with God, to remember his covenant relationship with God.

to remember God. Prayerlessness was a feature of Jonah's downward spiral in spiritual terms.

You may recall how we noted at the beginning of our study that it was quite possible that Jonah's spiritual head had been decaying for some time. Prayerlessness is a sign of spiritual decay, a spiritual decline.

For instance, we do not read that he prayed to consider the right response when God called him to go to Nineveh. You know, prayerlessness seems to characterize the life of Jonah.

[24 : 44] And unless we watch, the same thing can be true in our lives. What changed Jonah's life to make him a man of prayer? Well, he prayed, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me.

Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardst my voice. While on the ship in the storm, with the ship about to break up, Jonah did not pray. Even when the heathen captain implored him to pray, Jonah did not pray.

Even when he acknowledges sin, Jonah did not pray. The Lord had to bring him down lower. While on the ship all the sailors were using their nautical skills to try and save the ship and all on board.

And while all this was done, Jonah did not pray. But when all man's possibilities were shattered and all solutions blocked, everything stripped away and Jonah thrown into the sea, it took all that for Jonah to pray.

It was only when the darkness gathered and all the options were closed that he prayed. This was the turning point of Jonah's life and this is often true in our experience, that it is only when we are brought to the depths that we are ready to see God's way of deliverance, that we are brought to cry unto the Lord.

[26 : 13] The psalmist cries out in Psalm 130, out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice, let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

Yes, sometimes we have to be brought to the very depths, in order as it were for us to come to ourselves, and to cry unto the Lord.

Jonah, I believe, expected to drown, and sometimes the Lord has to take away all self-reliance and every other hope before we cry to him. Sometimes the Lord has to do that, in order for us to come to the place where we pray.

Peter says in his first letter in chapter five, humble yourselves therefore unto the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

He tells us here of his experience. As he was thrown into the sea, he cried unto the Lord.

[27 : 41] Now, we must not confine Jonah's prayer to the fish's belly, but inside the fish's belly, he relates to us his thoughts as he was drowning in the sea, and he tells us there that he cried unto the Lord.

As he was in the sea, as he was splashing and struggling, he cried unto the Lord. This was not necessarily the shouting of a drowning man, but a man in the sea expecting imminently to drown, and here he relates to us his thoughts, what he was thinking about, and how he was expressing his thoughts to the Lord.

What was going through his mind as he splashed and struggled in the sea and was expecting to drown, he cried to the Lord.

Now, inside the fish's belly, Jonah assured that this was God's provision for him, out of his loving kindness, that God had prepared this provision for him.

Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heard my voice. Jonah is expressing here the way that he felt as he struggled in the sea, his expectation was to drown, he was expecting to join the dead, the departed, those who were in shore, the place of the departed.

[29 : 05] out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heard my voice. He is here in the fish's belly, and he's relating to us what his experience was, what his thoughts were, as he was splashing and struggling in the sea.

He thought that he was soon to join the place of the departed, that he was soon to be drowned. And then in verses 3 to 4 he recounts his experience to us in greater detail.

Thou hast cast me into the deep in the midst of the seas and the floods compassed me about all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said I am cast out of thy sight yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

Now as we have already noted it was the sailors that the sailors were only the instruments of God. He says thou hast cast me into the deep in the midst of the seas.

You know it is good when we recognise the hand of God in our affliction. When we go through the furnace of affliction it is good for us if we can recognise the hand of God in those things.

[30 : 27] Well Jonah began to sink. the floods compassed me about all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

You know in many of the psalms the experience of drowning is used metaphorically like Psalm 42 for instance verse 7 deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waters but all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

Probably a psalm that is more known to us using drowning as a metaphor is Psalm 69 where we have these words say me O God for the waters are come into my soul I sink in deep mire where there is no standing I am coming to deep waters where the floods overflow me deliver me out of the mire and let me not sink let me be delivered from them that hate me and out of the deep waters let not the water flood overflow me neither let the deep swallow me up and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me but here in the experience of Jonah he's not using it as a metaphor but relates to the real situation that he found himself experiencing he says then I said I am cast out of thy sight he was struggling in the sea and splashing and struggling he felt completely abandoned just like the psalmist in

Psalm 31 for I said in my haste I am cut off from before thine eyes you know up to this point he is telling us how he felt as he was drowning yet not withstanding all his struggles he says yet I will look again toward thy holy temple in verse 7 he says when my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord and my prayer came unto thine holy temple well let us for a moment pause and look at the way that the Lord is leading his servant to repentance and to renewal Jonah has acknowledged his sin the Lord brings him lower so that Jonah is made helpless and hopeless he expects to drown and he concludes I am cast out of thy sight he is feeling completely abandoned and then he cries to the Lord yet I will look again toward thy holy temple what does he what does he mean by this well this is particularly important for me and you to realize all these steps that he has taken so far would be empty if this step were missing he is he has taken so far Jonah has acknowledged God's sovereignty and God's holiness and now he is brought to the place where his only hope is God's grace remembering God's merciful grace gave him confidence to pray and you know we must all be brought to that point where our only hope is God's grace and God's merciful grace and when we think of God's grace and God's merciful grace and that gives us confidence to pray he is remembering the temple as the place of atonement this is what Hugh Martin says on this point

Jonah thought of the temple and why? because God had placed his name there because there he gave the symbol of his presence as a God of love and especially a God of propitiated favour a God dwelling between the cherubim God on the blood sprinkled seat of mercy on the throne of grace you see if we can go back to Psalm 130 there the psalmist said if thou Lord should smark iniquities O Lord who shall stand but there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared I wait for the Lord my soul doth wait and in his word do I hope my soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning I say more than they that watch for the morning let Israel hope in the Lord for with the Lord there is mercy and with him is plenteous redemption and he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities it is interesting to notice how in his prayer

[35 : 31] Jonah is rehearsing the themes that we often find in the book of Psalms although he is not quoting any particular psalm you become aware that he is alluding or making reference to many of the psalms it has always been a well known fact that you will always find your experience in the book of Psalms this is why the Psalms are so valuable it is unlikely that any of us will have the experience of Jonah but nevertheless we may feel the same emotions for other reasons sometimes we can feel trapped within certain situations or within certain circumstances and Jonah can be an example or a pattern for us of what we are to do in such situations Jonah felt trapped in his situation what did Jonah do?

he prayed unto the temple and what Jonah did in faith received of course its fulfilment in Jesus Christ it is in Jesus Christ he is the true atonement for our sins this is a reminder to us that however far we may have gone away from God that however dark our circumstances may be that however trapped we may feel and that we can always look to the cross of Jesus Christ to the place where atonement was made to the place where the Lamb of God was sacrificed to reconcile us to God where the blood was shed that purchased the forgiveness of sin we may look to the cross in order to bring us to have proof of the unrelenting love of God

John wrote in his first epistle and if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous and he is the appropriation for our sins and not for us only but also for the sins of the whole world Paul said to the church at Rome what shall we say then to these things if God be for us who can be against us he that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all how shall he not with him also freely give us all things the writer to the Hebrew encourages us let us therefore come boldly into the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need so Jonah looking to the place of sacrifice the place of atonement praise to the Lord who hears him and rescues him although he is still inside the belly of the great fish and dear friends this is important as we said for me and you we can acknowledge our sin we can confess our sin but we must come to see

God's grace and God's mercy and however far you have gone on the path of sin God's grace and mercy is able to reach you and to bless you and to deliver you to bring you to salvation and this is what's happening in the experience of God's disobedient servant here he is brought to that place where he is aware of God's mercy and God's grace and so he looks to the temple to the place of atonement as we look to the cross of Jesus Christ now remarkably Jonah did not pray asking God to deliver him out of the fish's belly and we may ask well why I think that it is a sign that Jonah had been restored to favour with God

I think the words of the prophet Isaiah might be quite appropriate here O Lord O Lord I will praise thee though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away and thou comfortest me he realises that the Lord has intervened to rescue him his affliction became a source of good to him so that as long as he knows that the Lord's favour to be resting upon him he seeks no deliverance from his trials he seeks no deliverance from being in the belly of the fish because he knows now that the Lord's favour is upon him it is quite a remarkable thing and whether we have experienced it ourselves or not we have known people who in great difficult suffering trials knew the Lord's favour and they saw no longer a need to be delivered from their trials you know it's an amazing thing that sometimes it is in our sufferings in our pain in our trials that we come to know God better and when we know the favour of God whatever affliction or trial or sufferings that we are going through if we know that the Lord's favour is upon us then that is enough we rest in those things in our recent study of the letter of Paul to the church at Philippi we noted

[41 : 46] Paul's imprisonment and him telling the church at Philippi not to be over concerned about his state as he faced possible execution and you say how could that be well he knew the Lord's favour and whether he would be delivered or not he was going to be the winner and I think here we have a similar situation whether Jonah is delivered out of the belly of the fish or not he is the winner the Lord's favour is now upon him the Lord has forgiven him for his disobedience Jonah recounts for us his dramatic experience he says the waters compassed me about even to the soul the depth closed me round about the wheels were wrapped about my head I went down to the bottom of the mountains the earth with her barge was about me forever and then he speaks of the of the life from corruption oh lord my god this this tells us of course we have noted before that there's some time at elapsed between

Jonah being thrown into the sea and the fish swallowing him up he describes how he had sunk deep into the sea trapped the weeds of the sea and the seaweed on the bottom of the sea I went down to the bottom of the mountains another way of describing the floor of the sea and we have already noted the downward spiral of Jonah he went down to chopper down into the ship and down into the sea the earth was about me forever Jonah was convinced that he was trapped for death and yet hear what he says yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption oh lord my god again see how Jonah recognises the action of the lord yet hast thou brought up my life notice Jonah's life of disobedience is going down but the lord is now bringing him up when my soul fainted within me

I remembered the lord and my prayer came unto thee into thine holy temple here we have a picture of someone who is weak his life is stepping away and he says I remember the lord and my prayer came unto thee into thine holy temple we have already noted what he means by mentioning the temple but if we can just add this we have noted he didn't pray to be delivered out of the belly of the great fish because he had been restored back into the lord's favor and that was enough for jonah whatever would happen he was the winner he remembered his remembrance of god as a god of grace as a god of mercy was enough to assure him of the certainty of his salvation and it's the same for me and you we have been restored through jesus christ into the favor of god our sins forgiven then we are safe and secure even in the midst of the darkest trial and the darkest situation and darkest circumstances the darkest experience however hard these things may be we are safe and secure and inside the belly of the fish jonah knew that he was back in favor with god and that he was safe and secure he knew that he was the winner and then he says they that observe livenities forsake their own mercy he contrasts his experience in a time of danger with those whose religion was pagan livenities those things that command the central place in our lives to which we give loyalty and devotion which rightly belongs to god they that observe livenities they that give their heart to these things they forsake their own mercy but

I will sacrifice unto thee with a voice of thanksgiving I will pay that which I have vowed interesting this is how the sailors responded to the deliverance that was given to them surely this was certain evidence of repentance and a return to the Lord and then he says salvation is of the Lord this is an acknowledgement of what the Lord has done for Jonah it implies that not only the Lord could that the Lord only could have done this salvation is of the Lord only the Lord could have done it salvation does not occur because of what Jonah did for God but what God did for Jonah and salvation does not occur because of what we do for God but what God has done for us God was in Christ upon the cross reconciling the world into himself

Jonah did not go to God but God comes to Jonah sinner do not go to God for salvation but God comes to sinners in order to save salvation is of the Lord Jonah did nothing could contribute to his salvation all he could contribute was unbelief rebellion disobedience sin but Jonah inside the fish is fell his hope and that hope is God in his grace that God in his grace has not abandoned him and dear friend we can contribute nothing to our salvation or we have to contribute to unbelief rebellion disobedience and sin but we can have this hope that God in his grace has not yet abandoned me or you and the gospel being presented to us is evidence that

[48 : 20] God in his grace has not abandoned you and the Lord spake into the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land again the Lord's action the sovereignty of God the power of God well do you recognise God's saving power as you ponder his providence in your life God is not destroying you in your trials he is saving you he is restoring you from sinful rebellion from foolish self reliance from ignorant pride from unbelieving stubbornness so that you can turn to him for grace and dear friend as we leave this portion of scripture and meditation upon it today I just have to ask this are you still going on in your unbelieving stubbornness and your ignorant pride are you still going on in your foolish self reliance and your sinful rebellion against

God or are you turning to God for his grace and for his mercy and like Jonah turning back into the favour of God to be reconciled to God to be brought back into communion and fellowship with God is that your desire today to be unable to say as Jonah said salvation is of the Lord may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we give thanks to you for how far your grace and your mercy can reach and whatever our unbelieving stubbornness may be that thy grace is able to reach and to turn our hearts to bring us into thine own favour that we have that assurance that whatever circumstances or situations we might find ourselves in that we are safe and secure under the favour and the grace and the mercy of

God O Lord we pray that thou bless our meditation for us upon thy word today that it may be a means of bringing us to that place where we would ponder over thy word bring us to that place where we would examine our own lives in the light of thy word may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen