

Nineveh's Repentance

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Date: 21 June 2020

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[0 : 01] Welcome to our services today and as we come together to worship the Lord we would seek that he would be pleased to bless our time together, to bless his word to us.

Let us unite together in prayer. Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, thou art the Almighty God, thou art the creator of heaven and earth, thou art the one who is sovereign, thou art the one who is in control of all things, thou art the all-knowing God, thou art the all-powerful God.

And we give thanks to thee that we have access into thine own presence, and that we can come before thee with our petitions, that we can lay them out before thee, seeking, O Lord, that in thy grace and in thy mercy, that thou would meet with each one of us at our point of need.

We especially give thee thanks, O Lord, for the way in which thou hast manifested thyself to us through thy Son.

As a God of all mercy, as a God of all grace, we give thee thanks, O Lord, in the sending forth of thy Son.

[1 : 50] We give thanks that he humbled himself, that he took our nature unto himself, and in that nature that he bore what our sins deserved, and that he died, that he was buried, and that he rose again.

We give thanks that he ascended to thy right hand, where he ministers on behalf of those given to him by thee in the covenant of redemption, those for whom he died in this world, the cursed death of the cross.

We give thanks, O Lord, for the efficacy of his finished work, as we come before thee today, acknowledging our sinners, that he is the fountain that has been opened for sin and for uncleanness, that through him, and through his finished work, through the efficacy of that work, that thou art just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and to reconcile us to thyself, so that we can have peace with God.

O Lord, O Lord, grant to us that in some measure, upon our finite minds, there would be impressed this day the great privilege that we have in being reconciled to God, in being brought into communion and fellowship with God, and having that restored to us through thy Son, through thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

we ask, O Lord, that thou would be pleased to show thy favour to us, to bless thy word to us, to have it embedded upon our hearts, that it may bring forth evidence in our lives.

[3 : 53] Lord, bless our families, our children, bless those who are elderly, those who are in care homes, and in hospital, those, O Lord, who might be feeling very lonely tonight.

We pray, Lord, that thou would draw near to each, and meet with them at their point of need. O Lord, we live in strange times, we have our portion in providence, in such unusual time, in times that might leave us full of confusion.

Yet there is no confusion with thee. And we pray, O Lord, that what we are going through in providence at this time may have the effect of humbling us, and have the effect of making us to come in repentance.

Yet we fear, O Lord, that it could be having the opposite effect upon us, that we get so accustomed to things, and that we are the children of habit, that we fear, O Lord, that we are not coming in that brokenness that ought to be ours in thy presence, but that we have hardened our hearts.

O Lord, we pray that by thy grace, thou would help us to repent, that thou would help us to soften our hearts, and to humble ourselves, and to bow down in thy presence, and seek thy help, and acknowledge that we are the ones who have gone far from thee.

[5 : 36] We are the ones who have gone astray. But blessed be thy name, O Lord, that we are encouraged to come, and to confess our waywardness to thee, because that with thee there is mercy.

For we know, O Lord, and acknowledge as thy servant of old, that if you should mark our sin against us, that there is none that could stand. But with thee there is forgiveness.

Bless, we pray thee, our communities, our islands, and our nation, have pity upon us, we pray thee, and in thy compassion, O Lord, we pray that thou would turn us to thyself, for without thee we can do nothing.

O Lord, grant to us that there would be a willingness in our heart to open our hearts to thee, and to turn to thee. O Lord, we pray that thou would bless thy word to us, as we come to read it, and to meditate upon it at this hour.

O Lord, take thy word through thy spirit, and apply it to our hearts. Grant, O Lord, that thou would look upon us in thy love, and mercy, and kindness, and all that we ask for the forgiveness of our sins, in Jesus' name, and for his sake.

[7 : 00] Amen. Let us now read the word of God, as we find it in the Old Testament, and in the book of Jonah, and chapter 3.

And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go into Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I put thee.

So Jonah rose, and went into Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now, Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey.

And Jonah began to enter into the city, a day's journey, and he cried and said, Get forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them. For war came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his throne from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

[8 : 06] And he caused it to be proclaimed, and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king, and his nobles, saying, Let neither man, nor beast, herd, nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed, nor drink water.

But let every man and beast, be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God. Yea, let them turn every one, from his evil way, and from the violence, that is in their hands. Who can tell, if God will turn, and repent, and turn away, from his fierce anger, that we perish not.

And God saw their works, that they turned from the evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not. May the Lord bless to us, the reading of this word, at this time.

Now, continuing, with our study, of Jonah, we shall, with the Lord's help, and blessing, meditate, this week, on, verses 5, and 10.

Verse 5, which reads, So the people of Nineveh, believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them. Verse 10, And God saw their works, that they turned from the evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

[9 : 32] Last week, we saw how Jonah was called, and recommissioned by God, the second time. The word of the Lord, came unto Jonah, the second time, saying, Arise, go into Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it, the preaching that I bid thee.

And in contrast, to the first time, that the Lord commissioned him, to go to Nineveh, Jonah responded, by being obedient, to the call. So Jonah rose, and went into Nineveh, according to the word, of the Lord.

In one sense, the message given to him, to speak to the people, of Nineveh, was quite simple. Yet 40 days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. Nevertheless, we saw that, it contained, the overtures, of judgment, and sin, a call to repentance, a message of grace, and a message, of hope.

The Ninevites, were given by God, in his grace, at different times, a time, wherein they could believe, and repent, before he would come, to judge.

The very fact, that God, should send a prophet, with that kind of message, to them, meant there was hope. And the very fact, that God has given me, and you a message today, means, that, there is hope.

[10 : 54] Now, Nineveh, we are told, was a very, wicked city. God, spoke to Jonah, initially, with these words, our eyes, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness, has come, up before me.

The Ninevites, were violent people, who had no respect, for anyone. History, records, that the king of Nineveh, would usually, bring the severed head, of a recently, conquered king home, raise it on a pole, in the midst of his, royal banquet, commemorating his victory, and finally, put it over the gate, of Nineveh, where it slowly, rotted away.

The opposing generals, would even get, worse treatment, they were flayed alive, then left to bleed, and sometimes, their bodies, were divided into pieces, which were, distributed over the country, as souvenirs.

The entire history, of Assyria, and Nineveh, is filled, with a reign, of violence, terror, torture, and killing. But we are also told, that Nineveh, was an exceeding, great city, of three days journey.

The first view, that Jonah would have, of the city, was its walls, which we are told, were 75 feet high, and 32 feet thick, with 1,500 towers, and 15 gates.

[12 : 30] However, I'm not going to, give a history lesson, today, but, you will remember, that in the summer, of 2014, an aggressive, offensive, by militants, from the Islamic State, of Iraq, and Syria, ISIS, controlled, large groups, of territory, including, the city, of Mosul, and, ISIS, dug tunnels, deep under, one of the mouths, that formed, part of the, ancient, Assyrian city, of Nineveh, presumably, to search for, artifacts, that could be worth, something, on the black market.

But after, ISIS were, defeated, the, archaeologists, probe, those tunnels, and discovered, that the tunnels, led straight, to a, previously, undiscovered, and untouched, palace, built more than, 2,600 years ago.

Now, they made that, discovery, which was, proof to them, of the existence, of the city, of Nineveh.

Many other, artifacts, were found, over the years, and they are, in different, museums. But, for Jonah, it would not have been, an easy task.

He did not know, what kind of response, he would receive. He was entering, a very, hostile environment. Entering, such an environment, where one would, expect, to receive, mockery, and contempt, and scorn, and hatred, and derision.

[14 : 07] Here was, a Jew, preaching a message, that, contained, imminent, judgment, upon the largest, city, in the known world. Here was, a Jew, preaching to Gentiles.

A Jew, preaching the offer, of grace, upon belief, and repentance, to those, who were the enemies, of his nation. And, Jonah, may have been, thinking that, he would be put, to torture, and possibly death.

You may recall, how, Lot was treated, by his sons-in-law, when he brought, God's message, of judgment, on the cities, of Sodom, and Gomorrah, to them, as we find it, recorded, in Genesis chapter 19.

There we read, and the men said, unto Lot, as the angels, that came to Lot, hast thou here, any besides, son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters? And whoso, whatsoever thou hast, in the city, bring them out, of this place.

For we will destroy, this place, because the cry of them, is walks and great, before the face of the Lord. And the Lord, hath sent us, to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, up, get out of this place, for the Lord, will destroy the city.

[15 : 22] Now what response, did they give to him? Where we are told, he seemed as one, that mocked. They thought, that he was mad. Lot, who was a preacher, of righteousness, and his message, was not accepted, or believed.

Is it not remarkable, what is recorded for us, of how the people, of Nineveh, responded, to Jonah's message. This great, city, well fortified, what force, were in action, or in preparation, that could destroy it, in 40 days.

But we are told, the people, of Nineveh, believed, God. They were warned, of things, not seen as yet.

They were warned, of an imminent, destruction, of their city, which, of which no sign, of any kind, had appeared. There was no, evidence, whatsoever, that such, a destruction, would take place.

They believed, simply on the message, of the prophet, which they received, as, the word, of God. This was, probably, the last thing, that Jonah expected, or was it?

[16 : 38] What's Jonah surprised, when the people, of Nineveh, believed, and repented? Well, in the following chapter, we have these words, of Jonah, when he was angry, and displeased.

And he prayed, unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet, in my country? Therefore, I fled before thee, into Tarshish, for I knew, that thou art, a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee, of the evil.

Now, we shall look at, his prayer, in more detail, in the future. But, for now, I think it is right, for us to see, that Jonah, anticipated, the sparing of Nineveh, provided, they should repent.

And his reasoning, was grounded, on the character, of God. I knew, that thou art, a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee, of the evil.

And this is, the memorial of God, to all generations. This is the manner, in which he revealed himself, to Moses, when he asked God, to show him his glory.

[17 : 50] In Exodus chapter 33, I beseechly, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness, pass before thee, and I will proclaim, the name of the Lord, before thee, and will be gracious, to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy, on whom I will show mercy.

It was, in accordance, with this name, or nature, and character, that God acted, when he spared, Nineveh. The attitude of Jonah, on this occasion, may be compared, to be that, of the elder brother, in one of Jesus' parables, known as the parable, of the prodigal son, as recorded, in the gospel, Luke chapter 15.

The elder brother, resents, the mercy, that was shown, by his father, towards his younger brother, who had squandered, his inheritance, with sinful living, until he came to his senses, and came back home.

The father, had embraced him, and clothed him, with a rich robe, a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And his older brother, resents, the expression, of his father's love, and mercy, that was shown, to his younger brother.

This is, comparable to, Jonah's attitude, that he expressed to God, when the people of Nineveh, believed, and repented. So, we can conclude, that Jonah did anticipate, that upon them, believing, and repenting, that God would show mercy.

[19 : 19] We were, always told that, when we go out preaching, always to go out, with expectation, grounded upon, the character, of God. That is why, we give the gospel message.

That is why, we give the gospel invitation. We give the gospel invitation, grounded upon, the character, of God.

For we know, that God is a gracious God, that he is a merciful God, that he is a God, that is slow to anger, of great kindness, and that he will show mercy, to all those, who will believe, and repent.

But notice here, that it is not said, that the people, believed in Jonah, it says, that they believed, God.

For, these people, were fully persuaded, regarding the message, that Jonah gave them, that it was, from, God. Yet, forty days, and any of it, shall be, be, overthrown.

[20 : 34] They knew, that this was not, just simply, a message, from Jonah, but that this, was a message, from God. That Jonah, was only the mouthpiece, of God.

That the message, itself, was, from God. That Jonah, was simply, an ambassador, for God. Speaking, on behalf, of God.

God, yet, forty days, and any of it, shall be, overthrown. O, Palmer Robertson, remarks, it was not, the force, of the argument, presented by the prophet, that moved the people.

It was, the power, of God's truth, that pierced, to the heart. Never rely, on your own, persuasive powers, as the way, to save sinners. Never wait, until you have, confidence in yourself, to speak up, for Christ.

It is God, and it is truth, that people believe, you must remain, only the instrument. And these people, of Nineveh, understood that. They understood, that Jonah, was only an instrument.

[21 : 42] He was, only a prophet. He was the mouthpiece, of God. For here, it is quite clearly, brought before us, that the people, believed, God.

They exercised, faith on the message. They believed, the message of judgment, of repentance, of grace, and hope.

They believed, that if they did not repent, that God would destroy them. And they believed, that if they repented, of their sin, that God, in his grace, would have mercy, upon them.

They took, the word of God, for truth. They had no evidence, of its truth, but the word, of God alone. The things, that the message, warned of, were not seen as yet.

But in accordance, with what we are told, by the writer, to the Hebrews, faith is the evidence, of things, not seen as yet. So the people, of Nineveh, exercised faith.

[22 : 48] The Westminster, Confessional Faith, says that faith, trembles, at the threatening, of God, and embraces, the promises of God, for this life, and that which is, to come.

Remember, what is said of Noah, and his faith, in Hebrews chapter 11. There we read, We are told there, that Noah, by faith, being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, moved with fear.

He trembled, at the threatening, of God. Well, it is also clear, to us, that fear, was a great, and leading element, in the repentance, of the people, of Nineveh.

They trembled, for the king said, let them turn, everyone from his evil way, and from the violence, that is in his hands, who can tell, if God will turn, and repent, and turn away, from his fierce anger, that we perish not.

The dread of perishing, and of the Lord's fierce anger, operated, very powerfully, upon them. There is such a thing, which we call, slavish fear, which is simply, a physical terror, or dread, that may come, over us, leaving us, restless, which, in itself, is no evidence, of true repentance.

[24 : 36] Such fear, is usually, very temporal, and can soon, be shaken off, many people, experience, this kind of fear, when God's justice, and God's wrath, and hell, is spoken of.

But, true fear, has respect, to God, and his word. The sinner, begins to take, the word of God, concerning his state, and danger, to be real, and true, and acts, upon the belief, of that truth, of that truth.

When people, who may have been, ruthless, callous, and hard-hearted, regarding the things, of God, regarding God's word, and the Lord's day, and who may have, casually, taken, perhaps, God's name, upon their lips, in mockery, and in jovial manner, on true fear, in addition, to their experience, they begin, to be careful, and respectful, regarding the things, of God.

They take, the word of God, to be real, and true, and they act, upon the belief, of the truth. Our problem, with God's message, is that we go, around not, expecting, anything.

I think that, we can say that, it all comes, down to the smear, of being, persuaded. And the question is, today, are you, persuaded, of the message, of the gospel?

[26 : 13] Are you, persuaded, that what God says, he will do? The people, of Nineveh were, their response, evidenced, when they moved, with true fear.

we have, already mentioned, hope. The absence, of hope, excludes, the possibility, of repentance. If the people, of Nineveh, had concluded, that their destruction, was inevitable, they would have, been paralysed, but some hope, still remained.

The king said, who can tell, if God, will turn and repent, and turn away, from his fierce anger, that we perish not. You see, can this really happen, that God, would show mercy, to the people, of Nineveh?

That wicked city, whose wickedness, has come before, God. Can it really happen, that God, would show mercy, to the people, of Nineveh?

Maybe today, you're asking, can it really, be true, that God, would show me, mercy, and forgiveness? After all, I have sinned, against him, and all the things, that I have done, in my life, against him.

[27 : 32] Not only, have I messed up, my own life, but I messed up, the lives of others. Can there really, be forgiveness, for me? Well, what scope, was there for, entertaining any hope?

We have already, touched on, one of them, that there was, the sending of the prophet, with the message of warning, carried with it, an indication, that on God's part, they still were given, time to repent, and that offered, some room for hope.

And the same for you today. The Lord comes to you, with his message, today. He is giving you, this opportunity, to repent, and to believe, and to trust, in Christ.

He is, offering this room of hope, for you, today. God sends, this message of grace, and he sends it, to save.

His message, carried up, yet, forty days. In Isaiah chapter 55, we read, seek ye the Lord, while he may be found, call ye upon him, while he is near.

[28 : 49] Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, for my thoughts, and not your thoughts, neither are your ways, my ways, saith the Lord.

Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found. Call upon him, while he is near, while he is near, in the proclamation, of the gospel.

Seek him, and call upon him. Let the wicked forsake his way, the righteous man his thoughts. Let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

There is hope. Jonah himself would be a sign for them, after God's dealings with him, of which they would have been well aware.

He would be a sign of the grace, and mercy of God. What did all this result in? What was their response to all this?

[30 : 03] Well, the result of all this was repentance. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them.

For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed, and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king, and his noble, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything.

Let them not feed, nor drink water, but let man and beast, be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God. Yea, let them turn every one, from his evil way, and from the violence, that there is in their hands.

The catechism asks, What is repentance into life? And it answers this way, Repentance into life, is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it into God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after new obedience.

True repentance, you see, is a change of mind, it's a change of heart, it's a change of disposition, it is the making of a new heart, and the making of a right spirit.

[31 : 29] There is a new course of behaviour, that springs from a true fear of God, and a true sight of sin, which manifests itself in new obedience.

And that was the evidence that we have here, of a true faith, and a true repentance. It was a change of direction.

The faith of the Ninevites were accomplished by expressions of deep sorrow, and humble contrition over their sin. Having been deeply affected by God's message through his prophet Jonah, they demonstrated that their repentance was genuine.

They called a feast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them. In the ancient world, a fast was often a sign of inward contrition and humiliation.

For instance, in 1 Samuel chapter 7, we are told that before Israel overcame the Philistines at Mizpah, that Samuel gathered all Israel to Mizpah, and said, I will pray for you unto the Lord.

[32 : 42] And they gathered together to Mizpah, and threw water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day. And said, there we have sinned against the Lord, and Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpah.

They called a fast. They put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them. That fast, that was a sign of inward contrition and humiliation.

The wearing of sackcloth was an outward symbol of an inward sorrow over sin. It was worn by people to express lament, grief, and humiliation.

The sackcloth was a kosher, and roughly woven cloth, often made of goat's hair, and extremely uncomfortable to wear it. It was the normal dress of poor people, of prisoners and slaves.

And when you think of the king of Nineveh, then he arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

[33 : 57] The king took off his rich and costly robes, and put on sackcloth, and then sat in ashes, making a public display of self-humiliation, as example to his people, and all as a result of the word coming to him.

For the word came into the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

You know, in these days, when we hear of our own government, making a U-turn, and supplying voucher meals, during the summer holidays, for vulnerable families, which is good in itself.

Nevertheless, it all seems to have come about, from the letter and campaign, of a certain footballer. But is it not a pity, that the government would not listen, to the word of God, and make a U-turn, and seek national repentance, in the midst of our present crisis?

Isn't it sad, how they bypass the word of God? Well, what all these actions showed, that the Ninevites performed, is an expression of repentance, and all these actions by the Ninevites, expressed repentance, in terms of sorrow for sin.

[35 : 31] That the king made no attempt, to cover up his sin. He openly acknowledged his sin, before God. So genuine was this work, and the king said, that he issued a decree, for the entire city of Nineveh.

He caused it to be proclaimed, and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king, and his noble saying, that neither man nor beast, hurt nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed, nor drink water, but let every man and beast, be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God.

Yeah, let them turn everyone, from his evil way, and from the violence, that is in their hands. The words of the Assyrian king, concluded, as we already noted, with an expression of hope, who can tell, if God will turn and repent, and turn away, from his fierce anger, that we perish not.

Nineveh repented, and Nineveh was spared. God saw their works, that they turned from the evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

God saw their works. Now that is interesting. It is not said, that God heard their works, but that he saw their works. Because their works, was evidence, of a change of heart.

[37 : 00] Remember how the Lord, at one time, accused the people, with these words, this people, draweth nigh unto me, with their mouth, and honoureth me, with their lips, but their heart, is far from me.

You see, the Lord looks not, merely on the outward things, but he looks inwardly. He looks upon, the heart.

But the works of, the Ninevites, was evidence, of a broken, and contrite heart, which is a pleasing sacrifice, to the Lord.

He saw, their works. He saw the works, of a broken, and contrite heart. Jonah repented, and the Ninevites repented, but here we are told, that God repented.

And this has been, a difficult issue, for many. They question, the omniscience, son, the unchangeableness, of God.

[38 : 13] Of course, this is not the same kind, of repenting, as we are told of, about Jonah, or the Ninevites. The late John L. Mackay, says this, in his commentary, when God is set, to change his mind, matters are viewed, from a human perspective.

It appears to us, that there has been, a change in God. But what has, in fact, changed, is our human conduct. Or, Hugh Martin, explains this well, when he says, it was wicked, violent, unrighteous, proud, Nineveh, which God, had threatened, to destroy.

Then he goes on, to say, a city, sitting in sackcloth, and ashes, humbled, in the depths, of self-abasement, and up, appealing as lowly, supplicants, to his commensuration, that Nineveh, he had, that Nineveh, he says, he had never threatened.

The Nineveh, he visited, not with ruin. He had never said, that he would. Well, this I think, is a wonderful way, of putting it. The Nineveh, that he threatened, to destroy, was that Nineveh, that was wicked, violent, righteous, proud.

But the Nineveh, sitting in sackcloth, and ashes, a Nineveh, that was humbled, in the depths, of self-abasement, a Nineveh, that was, in repentance, that Nineveh, he had never threatened.

[39 : 45] And that Nineveh, he visited, not with ruin, because he had never said, that he would visit. The Nineveh, that he said, he would visit, with ruin, was the wicked, violent, and righteous, proud Nineveh.

See, God never changes, his mind, or purpose, and that is, a great encouragement, for us to repent. For God, his faith, will both, his wrath, against sin, and his mercy, towards, genuine repentance.

God's wrath, is against, against those, who are unrepentant. God's mercy, is for those, who are, repentant.

He gave Nineveh, a message, that was, conditional, if Nineveh, repents, he will not, do the evil, that he has announced, against, an unrepentant city.

And he spares, the, the, the, the, rather, the message, that he gave, to Nineveh. If Nineveh, repents, he will not, do the evil, that he has announced, against, an unrepentant city.

[40 : 56] He spares, the city of Nineveh, not because, he changes, but because, Nineveh changes. This is the way, that Jeremiah, the prophet expresses it, in chapter 18.

Behold, as the city is, in the potash hand, sorry, behold, as the clay is, in the potash hand, so are ye, in my hand, O house of Israel. At what instance, I shall speak, concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it.

If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent, of the evil, that I thought, to do unto them. And at what instance, I shall speak, concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant it.

If it do evil, in my sight, that it obey, not my voice, then I will repent, of the good, wherewith I said, I would benefit them. You see, God enters, into a relationship, with men and women, and comes with the gospel, and say, if you repent, then I will repent, of the evil, that I pronounced, against sinners, who remain, in their sin.

But if you don't repent, I will repent, of the good, which I said, I would bless you. See, Nineveh repents, and God blesses them.

[42 : 14] A great spiritual revival, takes place. The people of Nineveh, believed God, and in response, they turned to God, and trusting themselves, to him.

There are those, who question this revival, because Assyrian records, make no mention of it. But it was the practice, of official, engine historians, to delete events, that were embarrassing, to their cause.

For example, Egyptian records, make no mention, of the Israelites, crossing the Red Sea, and the drowning, of Egypt's army. Neither did, the Assyrians records, record the killing, of 185,000, of their soldiers, in Jerusalem, recorded for us, in second Kings.

Yet both events occur. So, this spiritual awakening, should not be discounted, simply because, secular history, did not record it. Jesus himself, validated the genuineness, of the Ninevites, conversing, and repentance, in Luke 11, when he says, the men of Nineveh, shall rise up, in judgment, with this generation, and shall condemn it.

For they repented, at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, a greater than Jonas, is here. Now, of course, like every revival, not every bond, was genuinely converted.

[43 : 30] But, I think it would right, for us to assume, that, reformation, definitely took place, among the people, in Nineveh. Some were genuinely converted, and for those who were left, there was some reformation, in their lives.

John Calvin says, we hence learn, for what purposes, God daily urges us, to repentance, and that is, because he desires, to be reconciled to us, and that we should, be reconciled to him.

You may ask, how could God, forgive a city, as wicked as Nineveh? Well, the city stands, as a witness, to the grace of God, for all who humble themselves, and repent.

Maybe, you are thinking today, how could God, forgive the things, that I have done? Well, for an answer, to that, we have to come, to a place called, Golgotha, and to the cross, of Jesus Christ.

The call of warning, and invitation, is still going out today, with specific time, given for a response. And the question is, what is your response, today?

[44 : 42] Are you like the Ninevites, who believed God's word, and repented? Nineveh stands, as a witness, to the grace of God, for all who will humble themselves, believe, and repent, for they will be saved, from the judgment, that their sins, deserve.

Nineveh, is a beacon, it is a light, for us, of the grace, and mercy of God. And that ought to be, an encouragement, for me, and you today.

There is no sinner, that is too great, not to be forgiven, if that sinner, will believe, and repent, of his sin.

Well, what is your response, to God's message, today? May the Lord, bless our thoughts, let us pray. Eternal, and ever, blessed Lord, we, give thanks to thee, that, we have thy message, that, we have thy word, and that thou, doth manifest, thy grace to us, in giving us, time to, to repent, to believe, and to repent.

And we, give thanks, unto thee, O Lord, for the promise, and the hope, that, can be ours, that if we do repent, that we will be saved, from what, our sins, desire, from the destruction, that, our sins, desire.

[46 : 22] And we pray, O Lord, that our, study upon, Jonah, and the city, of Nineveh, will be an encouragement, for us, today, to, come, even in the midst, of, our own knowledge, of ourselves, which has, come far short, of what we are, as sinners.

Yet, the knowledge, that we have, of ourselves, may, leave us depressed, and may discourage us, when we, think of our sin, and the sins, that we have, committed, and are committing, and the mess, of our lives, and yet, O Lord, thou art, encouraging us, to come, even as such, and to believe, and to repent, and we have, that promise, that thou, would forgive us, our sins, that thou, would reconcile us, to thyself, that thou, will give us life.

O Lord, we pray, that our response, may be like, the response, of the Ninevites, that they would not, rise up, and judgment, against us, for they, believed, in the word, of Jonah, and are greater, than Jonah, as before us, in the gospel, today, the Lord, Jesus Christ, oh, we pray, that many, would come, would bow down, in humility, and would acknowledge, their sin, and would repent, of their sin, and believe, in Christ, we ask, O Lord, that thou, continue with us, during the week, may the grace, of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship, of the Holy Spirit, be with you all, now and forevermore, Amen.