

# God's Grace and Mercy

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Welcome to our services today. And as we come together in this act of worship, we would seek that the Lord would be pleased to lift upon us his own countenance, to bless us and to bring his gospel to have a bearing upon our life.

That we would indeed seek that the Spirit of the Lord would apply the truths of the gospel and would open our hearts to receive it, that it may bring forth fruit in our lives to the glory and honour of his name.

Let us commence by joining together in prayer. Amen.

But blessed be thy name that thou art the one who knows the desires of our heart.

And as thou searcheth our heart, that thou dost see that we desire to honour thy name and to praise thy name for all the tokens of thy lovingkindness to us.

[ 2 : 5 2 ] For the token of thy lovingkindness in giving us thy word and giving us thy gospel, but especially, O Lord, for the token of thy lovingkindness in giving us a saviour, who was none other but the son of thine own bosom, the darling of heaven, whom thou did send into this world, into a hostile environment.

The saviour who bore our sin, the saviour who bore our sins in his own body on a tree. The one who died and was buried and who rose again.

Oh, we give thee thanks for thy salvation in Jesus Christ. And we give thee thanks, O Lord, for the work of thy grace in the hearts of sinners, such as we are, that enlightens us to our need of that salvation and enables us to take hold of that salvation through faith, so that we can experience that salvation in a very personal way, that we can be brought back into a relationship with our God, that we can be reconciled to God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thee thanks that he ascended to thy right hand, and the air that he ministers on behalf of those who will put their trust in him, and that in thy own appointed time, that he will return, and he will return to receive his own, and to bring them to be with himself forever.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless our communities, that thou, O Lord, would come on a day of thine own power, that thou would bring days of revival into thy church.

[ 4 : 5 4 ] When thy people would be stirred up, when they would wrestle with the heavens. O Lord, that we would come to realise our great dependency upon thy spirit to come and to change the hearts of our people, that sinners can be saved, that sinners would come to see the beauty of Christ, that sinners would be drawn to him, and unable to embrace him.

O Lord, we pray that thou would bless thy people, those whom thou hast redeemed. We pray, O Lord, that they may be faithful witnesses for thee in this world.

We remember, O Lord, today those who are ill, those who are in beds of affliction, in hospital, in care homes, in homes.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst be near to them, granting them healing, if that is in accordance with thy own sovereign will. Bless those who are anxious regarding them.

O may thy comfort fill their hearts. Remember, today we pray thee, those who mourn over the passing of loved ones. We are no strangers to death.

[ 6 : 19 ] We are no strangers to the fact that we are sojourners in this world. We are no strangers to the fact that our places will one day be empty.

O we pray, O Lord, that we may prepare our relationship with thee in taking Christ to be our saviour, in believing in Christ, in following Christ, that great preparation that is required for eternity if we are to spend eternity with thee.

O Lord, we pray that the urgency of this matter may be impressed upon our people through thy spirit. We ask, O Lord, thy blessing upon our doctors, our nurses, all our key workers at this time, at these strange days in which we find ourselves.

O Lord, although it may seem to us to be full of darkness and confusion, we know that it is not with thee, that there is order and light.

And we pray, O Lord, that it may please thee to grant to us that in our confusion that we would be given that order and in our darkness that we would be given that light. O that we would remember that thou art sovereign and that thou art working out thine own purpose and will.

[ 7 : 50 ] We ask, O Lord, that thou would bless thy word to us as we come to read it and as we come to meditate upon it, that living word of thine, that it may indeed be lodged into our hearts through thy spirit and that we may learn and be instructed or even rebuked by thy word.

Thou knowest what we stand in need of. And we pray, O Lord, that in the application of thy word to us through thy spirit, that we would learn, that we would be taught, that we would be teachable people.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless the preaching of thy word throughout our nation and even into the ends of the earth. We seek, O Lord, that it would please thee to grant to us the liberty of preaching thy word and the liberty of hearing thy word.

We ask all these things with the forgiveness of our sins in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen. Now we shall turn to the Old Testament and to the book of Jonah.

And we shall read chapter 1. The Old Testament, the book of Jonah, and chapter 1. Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before me.

[ 9 : 30 ] But Jonah rose up to flee into Tarshish from the presence of the Lord and went down to Joppa. And he found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare thereof and went down into it to go with them into Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea and there was a mighty tempest in the sea so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid and cried every man into his God and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it off them.

But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship and he lay and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper?

Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not. And they said every one to his fellow, Come and let us cast lots that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us.

So they cast lots and the Lord fell upon Jonah. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us, what is thine occupation and whence comest thou?

[ 10 : 48 ] What is thy country and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.

Then were the men exceedingly afraid and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord because he had told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee that the sea may be calm unto us?

For the sea wrought and was temptatious. And he said unto 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 tempest is upon you.

Nevertheless, the men rode hard to bring it to the land, but they could not, for the sea wrought and was temptatious against them. 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.

So they took up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea and the sea ceased from the raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and made vows.

[ 12 : 05 ] 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. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word.

Now returning to the beginning of this chapter 1 of Jonah, where we read, Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah and the son of Hometi, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me.

Many people will be familiar with the narrative of Jonah. It is a narrative with all kinds of unusual features.

We usually, when we think of Jonah, think of him as the portion that was swallowed by a great fish, and three days later, the fish vomited him alive onto the seashore.

Maybe that is all you know about this man, Jonah, for it is certainly a narrative that grips the imagination. and because of that, many has come to regard it as a legend, a myth, a simple story, an allegory, rather than an account of a historical event.

[ 13 : 37 ] However, we believe in the divine inspiration of all scripture, and therefore we accept that this book is a true historical account of events that took place.

Jonah's forthright record of his own force suggests to us that the book is a testimony of real experience. The Bible is very transparent about the failings and weaknesses of the children of God.

It never hides them. We read about the failings of Abraham and of Moses and of David and Solomon and others because the only place where their sins and mine and yours can be hidden is in the blood of Jesus Christ.

There is no other covering for our sins. And as we already seen in our study of the letter to the Philippians, we see that we must be sincere and honest and transparent and certainly this book here and what it records regarding God's servant Jonah is transparent and sincere and honest.

But a further pointer to the reality and truthfulness of this book is suggested by the fact that the Jews recognised it as part of the scriptures although it weighed against their national prejudice in accepting God's mercy to another nation and in particular the Assyrians who were Israel's enemies which may have played a major part in the disobedience of Jonah as we see later.

[ 15 : 28 ] But the strongest proof of the reality and truthfulness of this book is found in the New Testament as the Lord Jesus Christ refers to Jonah and his experience in the great fish as a real life event.

In Matthew 12 we read For as Jonas 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 there in reference to his own death and his own resurrection.

He also speaks of the repentance of the Ninevites as an actual occurrence for in the selfsame chapter we read The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonas and behold a greater than Jonas is here.

Here Jesus informs the Pharisees and the teachers of the law that they like the people of Nineveh that they needed to repent of their sins.

Jonah's prophetic ministry is unique in that it is only from a very brief comment that we find in 2 Kings chapter 14 and verse 25 that we know about his prophetic ministry in Israel and in that passage we read regarding Jeroboam the second who was king in Israel at this time that he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord that he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nipah that's Jeroboam the first who made Israel to sin he restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath and to the sea of the plain according to the word of the Lord God of Israel which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah the son of Amittai the prophet which was at Gath Hebar and that is all we know about his prophetic activity in

[ 17 : 41 ] Israel when he predicted the expansion of the northern kingdom in the reign of king Jeroboam the second there is no further mention of Jonah except what we read about him in the book bearing his name which records nothing for us about his prophetic activity in Israel it simply begins with the command of God to prophesy against the wicked Gentile city of Nineveh and in the New Testament we have these references already noted in the Gospel of Matthew yet this little mention that we have of his prophecy in Israel is particularly important for us to understand in Jeroboam the second of Israel we are told that he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord this was a time of national idolatry for

Jeroboam led the people into gross sin and yet the Lord in seeing the bitter suffering of the people gave Jonah here a positive message to give to them regarding the expansion of the kingdom and what we see here is that in spite of Jeroboam's wickedness that God prospered Israel and enabled him to recapture lost territory exactly as Jonah had prophesied Jonah would have been made aware of the long suffering of God at a time of great provocation against the darkness of the day God was raising up a servant to give the people a glimmer of light and hope for the Lord saw the affliction of Israel that it was very bitter for there was not any shut up nor any life nor any helper for

Israel and the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Johas now this was not a reward for Jeroboam's piety or that the people of Israel were a people who were so obedient this was altogether and absolutely a gracious initiative of God regarding the state of Israel because of their disloyalty to God he had been punishing them through foreign invasions especially Assyria but now on seeing their desperate situation for they were on the point of being wiped out he saves them through the hand of wicked Jeroboam the second he would he would blot out their covenant commitment to his people again there the grace and mercy of

God shines so brightly while we cannot condone sin but speak out against it making people aware of the fact that sin deserves God's wrath and curse that to continuing sin will have consequences nevertheless we must also hold out to the people the long suffering of God tells us when we do so much to provoke him and how he holds out to us his hand of grace and mercy but another point that is remarkable here and that we must not overlook is that God brought his purpose to fruition through a wicked king you see this brings before us the fact that God is sovereign and he can work through a wicked king to bring forth his purpose and will that ought to be a comfort for us when we consider how our own nation has turned their back upon

God and the wickedness that prevails in our nation yet we have the gospel we have the witness of God's people we have freedom protected by government God and relative peace while many of them in government have no thought whatsoever about God and we can see here that the people of Israel did not recognise their good fortune as coming from the Lord they continued in their pagan ways to God to repent of the people despising the long suffering of God not knowing that the goodness of God ought to lead them to repentance to provoke

[ 23 : 48 ] God by their continual sinning that eventually caught up with them and they were taken into captivity as we always point out sin has consequences and as that was true for Israel so shall it be true for all those who will continue to provoke God by despising his goodness towards them Peter answers those who were shouting where is the promise of his coming Peter answers them and he says the Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness but is long suffering to us not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance now that's a thought for us today God keeps back his judgment his second coming has not happened yet and we can ask the question why why is the Lord keeping back his judgment why has not his second coming happened well here is the answer given by

Peter so that sinners can be saved he is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance and my dear friend today who are outside the realm of grace his I gave him which is right why has this second coming happened when it is because of you because he is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

But as it was for Israel, here is the Lord's goodness to them and they despise that goodness. Here he has prospered with them and extended in their kingdom but they have despised the Lord's goodness to them.

They keep on in their way of sinning and their way of worshipping pagan gods. You see, eventually it catches up with them and they are brought into captivity.

And dear friend, if you continue to provoke the Lord, if you continue to despise his patience and his long-suffering with you, then this is going to be a fact in your experience that your sin will catch up with you.

[ 26 : 26 ] Sin always has consequences. So here we see then that this historical account is much more than about a man being swallowed by a great fish.

It is a narrative about God. It brings to our attention the sovereignty of God, that God clearly controls events.

He is working out everything in accordance to his own purpose and will. It brings before us the character and the attributes of God.

God is omniscient. He knows everything. He is omnipresent. God is everywhere. He is omnipotent. He is all-powerful. It was God who sent the storm.

It was God who made the Lord to fall upon Jonah. It was God who prepared the fish to swallow Jonah. It was God who spared Nineveh and brought the Ninevites to repentance.

[ 27 : 27 ] You see, this book of Jonah brings before us the God of all grace and mercy. A sovereign God who is in control of all events and who works out his own purpose and will.

He is the sovereign God who has control over nature, who has control over the natural elements, who has control over all circumstances. Remember how we recently studied how the Lord stilled the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

But we must also recognise that it was the Lord who raised the storm in the first place. That is brought before us so vividly in Psalm 107.

We read, For he commanded and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. And then he says, He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

The book of Jonah stands as a vital link in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.

- [ 28 : 40 ] Remember the words of God to Abraham when he covenanted with him, when he said, And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. This was a promise concerning Jesus Christ, that in him all nations of the earth would be blessed.

That is, Jews and Gentiles. This was something that was not very acceptable to the Jews, or to Jonah, for they regarded the Gentiles as dogs outside the sphere of salvation.

And as we will come to see, that played a major part in Jonah's disobedience. Israel was of the opinion that God cared only for them, and resisted any idea of God extending his grace to any other nation, especially Nineveh, especially the Assyrians, for they were Israel's enemies.

They were Gentiles. They were dogs. Nevertheless, we have in the narrative of Jonah a foreshadowing of what Paul, in one of his letters, refers to as the great mystery, that is, the introduction of the Gentiles into the Church of God.

It was not explained or opened up for them, as we have it now. Nevertheless, Jonah's mission to Nineveh was a picture for us of the inclusion of the Gentiles into God's redemptive plan.

- [ 30 : 14 ] The book is about God's grace to sinners, not only among Jews, but also among the Gentiles. This is why we have a gospel to proclaim.

This is why Paul could say, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God into salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

I am not disappointed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God into salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

I glory in the gospel of Jesus Christ. I rejoice in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, this book opens in the familiar way by saying that the word of the Lord came to Jonah.

This was a great privilege for Jonah in receiving the word of the Lord. However, it must have been quite a shock for him when he realised that the word came with a commission or command for him to go to Nineveh.

- [ 31 : 25 ] Israel, of course, was Jonah's comfort zone despite the environment that was around him. But God was now commanding him to go outside his comfort zone and to serve him in preaching in this exceedingly great city of Nineveh.

Jonah was being commissioned to go to a Gentile city, renowned for its wickedness, a city that we know historically to one of the great cities of Assyria.

Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before me. This indeed was a breathtaking commission, taking him out of his comfort zone.

He was commanded by the Lord to go and preach and to seek to bring the people to repentance, those who were the enemies of his own nation, Israel.

Nineveh was located in what we know now as northern Iraq, a city that was noted as that great city. It was surrounded by massive walls a hundred feet high and wide enough to take three chariots abreast.

- [ 32 : 43 ] But it was a city renowned for its paganism, idolatry, and immorality, and violence. It is said that its leaders thought nothing of skinning people, cutting off the fingers, cutting off the lips and noses of those who opposed them.

The population of the city would have been between 600,000 to one million. this indeed was not an easy task.

But there are times when that is the way that the Lord speaks to us. He brings us out of our comfort zones and he commands to us a task that may not be easy for us to perform.

There were other prophets like Isaiah, Nahum, and Sephaniah who gave oracles against Assyria. But what is unusual here is that a prophet is being sent to a city in Assyria to preach against and call his people to repentance with the intention that by sending the prophet to preach to the people of this wicked city that he would save Nineveh.

But let us for a moment consider the person to whom this call was given. We are told that Jonah was the son of Amittai and that he was from Geth-Heber in Zebulun.

- [ 34 : 14 ] It is possible that he was trained in the school of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho and as we have already noted he prophesied during the wicked reign of Jeroboam II.

But here again we see the sovereignty of God in calling this man and giving him the task to go and cry against Nineveh because it was not unknown to God how Jonah would respond.

God knew that Jonah would not only be reluctant to go but that he would go down in the path of disobedience. You may ask why then did God choose him?

Well if you are a Christian today this may well be often the question that you ask yourself why did God choose me?

God reminds us that it is by grace that we are saved and it is grace that holds us in spite of our failures and disobedience.

- [ 35 : 22 ] it is all down to the grace of God. Remember John Newton's famous sin amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a rich like me.

It is all down to the grace of God. You see Jonah refused to obey the first command to go to Nineveh but when he was chastised he appeared to have a change of heart about God's directives.

You see God is going to teach Jonah that the grace that is going to be experienced by the people of Nineveh is going to be experienced by Jonah as well. when the word of the Lord first came to Jonah he rejected it.

The fact that it would come the second time after it was rejected the first time is a demonstration of God's grace. And you know my dear friend there is a sense in which the gospel has come to you more than once.

It has come to you many many times. And the reason that the gospel keeps coming to you when you reject the gospel is a demonstration of God's grace.

- [ 36 : 47 ] There were many lessons that Jonah had to learn which prepared him when eventually as he came to preach to the Nunavides he was taught much about God's grace and mercy and God's mission to all sinners both Jew and Gentile.

there is also this that in spite of Jonah's failure when he repented God was pleased to use him and bring the Nunavides through Jonah to repentance.

In all God's dealings with him God's grace and mercy shone forth and in God's dealings with me and you God's grace and mercy shined forth.

when we come to the New Testament we find the same with Peter who denied his Lord but who repented and we know how God used him on the day of Pentecost.

You see it is a reminder to us that God can still use us even when we have failed him. If we come to repentance then we can still be used by him to be instruments of his grace and mercy.

- [ 37 : 59 ] Whatever was in our past and whatever is in our present if we repent God can use me and you. Why did God choose Jonah with all his knowledge of Jonah?

He chose him to be a trophy of his grace and mercy. And the same reason if we are Christians why he chose me and you and if we are not Christians then his grace and mercy is extended to you as it were to the people of Nineveh.

It is because of his grace and mercy it is because to be a trophy of his grace and mercy that he has chosen me and you if we are believers today and if we are not then his grace and mercy extended to you as it were to the people of Nineveh.

Is it not remarkable that God has chosen redeemed sinners to bring the gospel to other sinners? Paul wrote but we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

As it was a great privilege for Jonah to receive the word of God and to bring that word to the city of Nineveh. Owen does not worship and to RAC.

[ 39 : 42 ] The most valuable thing we can ever hold in our hand and have in our homes is the word of the Lord. The greatest deficiency that can ever be brought to any person is that he or she does not hear the word of the Lord.

The worst thing that could ever come upon us as a people is a famine of the word of the Lord. The prophet Amos writes, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that they will send a famine in the land, nor a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east. They shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

That is the worst possible kind of famine. How thankful we ought to be today to have the word of God. In these strange times in which we are passing through at this very moment, in all the restrictions that are upon us, when the churches are closed, yet we have the word of God, and yet we are unable to preach the word of God, we have means of reaching people with the word of God.

And that is a token of God's grace and mercy. But let us remember that there are many places in Scotland today where vast congregations gather to hear the word of the Lord.

[ 41 : 22 ] And these places today are empty. A famine of the worst kind has come, where people no longer have the word of God or decide to hear the word of the Lord. The word of the Lord, says the psalmist in Psalm 119, was as a lamp to his feet and a light to his path.

In the same psalm he says, order or direct my steps in thy word. Here we see one who values the word of the Lord. Well, how about you?

What value do you put upon the word of the Lord? Do you only put a value upon it at times of crisis? Many do. And when the crisis is over, the word of the Lord is forgotten until the next crisis is upon you.

Is that you? We should always examine our attitude to the word of God. Many think that they can either take it or leave it.

But our attitude to the word of the Lord always has consequences. In Hebrews chapter 4, we read, For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and as a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

[ 42 : 44 ] You see, the word searches us out. And it is a blessed thing today if you are finding that the word of the Lord is searching you out.

I am not saying that it is comfortable, but I am saying that it is a great blessing. On this particular occasion, the word of the Lord that came to Jonah was in the form of a command.

And he was to go to Nineveh and preach God's word. And here it is in the form of a command. There is a sense in which the word of the Lord comes to us all with a command.

The word of God commands us to repent and to believe in Jesus Christ in order to be saved from what our sins deserve. But what is your response to the command?

For the church, there is always the command to serve the Lord, to witness to the world around us. What is our response to that command? At the beginning, we briefly mentioned the strongest proof to the reality and truthfulness of this book is found in the New Testament, where the Lord Jesus Christ provides the significance of Jonah's experience.

[ 44 : 01 ] Jonah was assigned, says Jesus, to the Ninevites of his generation. In Luke 11, we read, and when the people were gathered together, he began to say, this is an evil generation.

They seek a sign and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonah's the prophet. For as Jonah was assigned to the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of Man be to this generation.

Jonah appears to the Ninevites as one brought back from the grave. In the same way, though, on a far superior level, Jesus would be assigned to his generation and to our generation.

Indeed, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ will be the fulfilment of the sign or type of Jonah. But unlike Jonah, Jesus will be swallowed and discouraged, not by fish, but by death itself.

In Acts 2, we read these words, whom God hath raised up, having loosened the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holding of it.

[ 45 : 06 ] The Lord Jesus Christ is one who is greater than Jonah. In Matthew 12, we read, the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah.

and behold, a greater than Jonah, the seer. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the one who went to the cross, the one who bore the sins of his people upon his own body on the tree.

Yes, a greater than Jonah, the seer. And the gospel is the good news about this one who is greater than Jonah. Will the people of Nineveh stand in judgment to condemn you who refuses the words of Jesus Christ?

Now the word of the Lord came into Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me.

Oh, it was a day of a demonstration, a manifestation of the grace and mercy of God that the word was going to come to the Nineveh.

[ 46 : 36 ] And dear friend, it is a day of manifestation and demonstration of the grace and mercy of God that today you have the gospel. The gospel has come to you.

But my dear friend, what are you going to do with the gospel that has come to you? Well, we know through this book that the Ninevites repented.

Is that going to be your response? Are you going to repent as the gospel comes to you? Or are you going to harden your heart and despise it more and more?

Oh, dear friend, what is your response response to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? May the Lord bless our thoughts.

Let us pray. Eternal and ever blessed God, we thank thee that thou has brought the gospel to us.

[ 47 : 46 ] And we pray that we may respond to that gospel in a positive way, that we may open our hearts and believe the gospel, that we may believe in the Christ of the gospel, for in him and in him alone is salvation.

Oh, that the people of Nineveh may not rise up to condemn us in judgment, and that we have been given that great privilege of the gospel, and that we have rejected and despised it.

Oh, Lord, we pray that we may indeed come as a people who repent, accept the gospel, seek the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

We give thee thanks, oh, Lord, for the preciousness of the word that has come to us. And we pray, oh, Lord, that it may be a means of drawing us to know thy salvation and to experience thy salvation.

We pray, Lord, that thou would continue with us. 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.

[ 49 : 11 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.