

May 03, 2026



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

God wants to hear our heart

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:

True repentance comes from the heart. The Lord longs for us to confess our sins to Him and receive His forgiveness so we can love and serve Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm

(Joel 2:13 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Oct 18, 2016)

**Series: Social Teachings
of the Church**

**UNIT 3: Fulfilling Our Obligations
To God and Society**

NEXT WEEK

Work as Christian Duty
(Gen 2:15; Exod 20:9; John 5:17; John 9:4; Acts 20:33-35; 2 Thess 3:6-12)

Christian Expectation of Grace Jonah 3:1-5; 4:6-11

Lesson Background and Introduction

Lesson Context: Historical

Jonah's ministry is difficult to date. The closest approximation we may make is that he prophesied about events that occurred during the reign of Jeroboam II, the king of Israel from 793 to 753 BC (2 Kings 14:23-29). The designation "Israel" in this context refers to the northern kingdom that formed following the division of the original nation of Israel. This division occurred after King Solomon's death, around 930 BC (1 Kings 12:20). In the eighth century BC, before the reign of Jeroboam, military conflicts existed between Israel and Assyria. The Assyrians were known for their brutal violence. Assyrian kings boasted about their power and commissioned visual displays of their cruelty as propaganda, reminding enemies of the futility of resistance. Nineveh was a major city in the Assyrian Empire. It became the empire's capital in about 700 BC during the reign of Sennacherib. Jonah prophesied more than 50 years before Nineveh became the seat of government. The city is first mentioned in the Bible when a descendant of Noah's son Ham built it (Genesis 10:11). During Jeroboam's reign, Israel experienced prosperity, though it was short-lived. Their fortune was due in part to internal turmoil in Assyria. However, people remembered past conflicts, and soldiers involved in those wars may have been alive during Jonah's lifetime. Jonah's hometown of Gath Hopher was in northern Israel (2 Kings 14:25), and this region likely experienced direct conflict with the Assyrians. Eventually, the Assyrian Empire regained strength and, in 722 BC, attacked the northern kingdom of Israel.

Lesson Context: Literary

The book of Jonah opens with the Lord commanding Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach against it (Jonah 1:1-2). The Lord observed the city's wickedness. Jonah, however, disobeyed the Lord's command. He traveled to Joppa and boarded a west-bound ship to Tarshish (1:3). The Lord sent a storm to intercept Jonah and the ship. To save the vessel, the sailors lightened its load (Jonah 1:5; compare Acts 27:18). Their efforts failed, leading the crew to cast lots to determine the responsible party for the sudden storm (Jonah 1:6-7). Their process pointed to Jonah (1:7). Jonah revealed that he fled the presence of "the Lord, the God of heaven" (1:9-10). He directed the ship's crew to throw him overboard as a last-ditch effort to calm the storm. They agreed to do so only after requesting that Jonah's God not hold them guilty of murder (1:14). Rather than let Jonah drown in the sea, the Lord prepared "a huge fish" to swallow him (Jonah 1:17). For three days and three nights, Jonah remained in the fish. He acknowledged his situation and prayed to the Lord (2:1). Jonah promised to make good on his vow to preach the Lord's salvation to Nineveh (2:2-9). After three days, God directed the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land (2:10). The prophet followed the Lord's command to go to Nineveh.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Proclamation for Repentance (Jonah 3:1-5)

A second chance (1-2)

- A second chance to do good to people (Gal 6:10)
- A second chance to live wisely (Eph 5:15-16)
- A second chance to make the most of (Col 4:5)
- A second chance to act with wisdom (Ps 90:12)
- A second chance to work (John 9:4)

Plea for urgency (3-4)

- Urgent because the end of all things is near (1 Peter 4:7)
- Urgent because Jesus' coming is nearer than we think (Rom 13:11-12)
- Urgent because no one knows when Jesus will return (Matt 24:36)

Repentant belief (5)

- Belief overcomes condemnation (Mark 16:16)
- Belief because it is the way of salvation (Rom 10:9-10)
- Belief because it is commanded (1 John 3:23)
- Belief without doubt (Mark 11:22-23)
- Belief in the living God (1 Tim 4:10)

Object Lesson on God's Loving Mercy (Jonah 4:6-11)

God's Mercy is always initiated by God Himself (6-8)

- God initiates mercy because He loves us (Rom 5:8)
- God initiates mercy because Jesus took the initiative and bore all of our transgressions (Isa 53:5-6)
- God initiates mercy because God is faithful and righteous (Rom 3:3-5)
- God initiates mercy because of grace (Eph 2:8-9)
- God initiates mercy because it is mercy that prompted God's salvation (Rom 9:16)
- God initiates mercy because God started it before the beginning of time (2 Tim 1:9)

God's Mercy is all about helping people (9-11)

- God's mercy to people should prompt us to be merciful to others (Matt 18:28-33)
- God's mercy to other people doesn't mean that He doesn't love us (Luke 15:28-31)
- God's mercy to people teaches us how to be merciful (Luke 6:35-36)
- God's mercy to people teaches us about forgiveness (Eph 4:32)