



Rice Memorial MBC

Pastor Jimmy L. Harper, Sr., President of State Convention
Apostle Walter Camp, 1st Vice President
Dr. Sidney L. Miller, 2nd Vice President
Pastor Tremayne Harris, 3rd Vice President
Pastor Harry Noble, President of State Congress of Education
Pastor Michael Hansberry, Southern District Moderator

Rice Memorial Missionary Baptist Church

Apostle Walter F. Camp, Presiding Senior Pastor
Pastor David K. Baker III, 2nd Presiding
802 W. 15th, Little Rock, AR 72202, 501-773-6546
www.RiceMemorialBaptistChurch.org

God's Love for the Lost

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **May 21, 2017**

Jonah 3:1-10

Introduction: This lesson allows us to better understand God's (Yahweh's) requirement for the people that work in what's commonly called the **"Five-fold ministry"** in the body of Christ. God placed us in the office when we were born-again because it pleased him. (1 Cor. 12:28) From the first two chapters of Jonah, we understand that he demands that his prophets, etc. DO exactly as he has commanded them.

So, accepting the "ministry" in which he has placed us does NOT make us what we are! We **ARE** what God has MADE US, whether we accept it or not! And one day, we'll have to give account as to whether or not we fulfilled what he determined for our lives. That means when a person becomes **aware of** their ministry, they should accept it out of **reverence** for God. And do it, NOT because they KNOW ENOUGH scriptures. But, accept it because it's his will, and work as his minister. Like Jonah, all ministers have to learn, and mature in the ministry! Understanding this also helps make it EASY to say yes to his will.

When I accepted my ministry in March of 1975, for sure, I knew TWO things! First, I knew don't **run FROM** whatever God wants you to do! The **testimony** of my pastor, Earnest Dukes, allowed God to reveal this truth. A few months later, I went on 3 day fast to find out from God if I was a minister of the gospel. The last day, on Wednesday morning, while reading my bible, he began to speak: interpreting a DREAM that he'd given me the Friday night of the previous week. I stopped reading, listened, and saw clearly the interpretation confirmed my ministry! Immediately, I told him, **"I'll go. But, I don't know anything! So, you've got to TEACH me."**

The Sunday morning after this, I told the church what happened, and that I was accepting my ministry. Well, as you know, God did teach me! And he's still teaching me, 42 years later.

Jonah 3:1, And the **word** of the LORD (Yahweh) **came** unto **Jonah** the **second time**, saying...

NOTE: God was **determined** to **do the work** **through Jonah**, so He did NOT give up on the reluctant prophet. God is often just this committed to doing His work through a man. (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/guz/jonah-3.html>)

Jonah 3:2, Arise, **go** unto **Nineveh**, that **great city**, and **preach** unto it the **preaching** that **I bid (appoint, command)** thee.

Thought 1. If Jonah had obeyed when he was first sent, this is also what he would've done at that time. So now, since he's going, whatever he hears from Yahweh has been appointed and commanded to be said. This is still TRUE, today, for us ministers in the body of Christ.

NOTE: ...and **preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.**" No preacher of God's Word has any other message than the divine revelation, his first and **only DUTY** being to **proclaim the truth of God** unto all alike. It is a shame that in our own times, as in many

others, "All this is changed into **vain SHOW** at the will of the multitude, and the breath of **popular favor.**" (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/jonah-3.html>)

Thought 2. Since God (Yahweh) is the one that placed us IN whatever position of ministry in Christ's body that pleased him, he also is the one that **decides WHERE** we ARE to minister. This is the case with ME, as senior pastor, and the congregation that I oversee. We've been SENT to, and we're working within a Baptist Convention in Little Rock, AR.

Here's how it happened. At God's direction, on January 31, 1988, my birthday, I became the Pastor of this congregation. After seeing a number of errors in the Baptist doctrine, I decided to CHANGE our name, and make us a "Christian Fellowship." But, before I moved on the thought, God spoke to me by his Spirit, in a stern voice, and said, "Leave it Baptist!"

Well, I obeyed what I heard without knowing his reason for keeping us in a Baptist denomination. A few years later, he explained to me that the "LIGHT" he was giving me was to be shined where there was "DARKNESS: lack of knowledge." And if everybody who receives light, that's IN the Baptist denomination leaves, then, who's going to give his children who are there, the understanding needed, from his preached/taught WORD, to GROW-UP to maturity? So, we gladly serve him by serving WHERE it pleases him!

Acts 16:6-10, Now when they had gone throughout **Phrygia** and the region of **Galatia**, and were **FORBIDDEN** of the **Holy Ghost** to preach the word in **Asia**, After they were come to **Mysia**, they assayed to go into **Bithynia**: but the Spirit suffered them NOT. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a **VISION appeared** to **Paul** in the NIGHT; There stood a **MAN** of **Macedonia**, and prayed him, saying, Come over into **Macedonia**, and **help us**. And after he had **seen** the **VISION**, immediately WE endeavoured to GO into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called **US** for to **preach** the gospel unto **them**.

Galatians 2:1-2, Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And **I WENT UP BY revelation**, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

Jonah 3:3, So **Jonah** arose, and **WENT** unto **Nineveh**, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of **THREE** days' journey.

NOTE: "it was much larger than Babylon:" and Ninus, the builder, NOT only proposed to make it the **largest city of the world**, but the largest that could be built by man. See Diodor. Sic. Bib. 50:2. And as we find, from the lowest computation, that it was at least **fifty-four** or **sixty English miles in circumference**, it would take the prophet three days to walk round upon the walls, and announce from them the terrible message, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be destroyed!"

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/jonah-3.html>)

NOTE: ...Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh - like the son who was at first disobedient to the father's command, "Go work in my vineyard," but who **afterward "repented, and went"** (Matthew 21:28-29). As in the former call Jonah "AROSE" at once, and lost no time in disobeying, so now he loses no time in obeying God. Jonah was thus the fittest instrument for proclaiming judgment, and yet the hope of mercy on repentance, to Nineveh, being himself a living exemplification of both-**judgment** in his entombment in the fish, **mercy on repentance** exemplified in his deliverance. Israel professing to obey, but NOT obeying, and so doomed to exile in the same Nineveh, answers to the son who said, **"I go, sir, and went NOT."** In Luke 11:30 it is said that Jonas was not only a sign to the men in Christ's time, but also "unto the Ninevites." On a later occasion (Matt. 16:1-4), when the Pharisees and Sadducees tempted Him, asking a sign from heaven, He answered,

"No sign shall be given, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."

Thus, the sign had a two-fold aspect, a direct bearing on the Ninevites, an indirect bearing on the Jews in Christ's time. To the Ninevites he was NOT merely a prophet, but himself a **wonder in the earth**, as one who had **tasted of death**, and yet had **NOT seen corruption**, but had now RETURNED to witness among them for God.

...Thus he was a "sign" to them of **wrath** on the one hand, and, on the other, of **mercy**. Guilty Jonah saved from the jaws of death gives a ray of hope to guilty Nineveh.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/jfu/jonah-3.html>)

Luke 11:29-30, 32, And when the people were gathered thick 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 Jonas** the **prophet**. For as **Jonas was a sign** unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The men of **Nineve** shall rise up in the **judgment** with this generation, and shall CONDEMN it: for they **repented** at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a **greater than Jonas** is here.

Jonah 3:4, And Jonah **began to enter** into the city a **day's journey**, and he **cried**, and said, Yet **forty days**, and Nineveh shall be OVERTHROWN.

NOTE: "Began to enter into the city ..." This says nothing about Jonah's going a whole day's journey into Nineveh and then starting to preach, but points out the fact that as he "started" the day's journey into Nineveh, he began to cry the cry that God gave him.

"Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown ..." The word "overthrown" here, literally means, "**Destroyed from the very foundation**" and is the same word used in speaking of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah."^[16]

"Yet forty days ..." Why forty? "The number forty is often associated in the scripture with HUMILIATION (act of humiliating [abating { pulling down, diminishing } PRIDE] **OR humbling**). It was **forty days** that Moses, Elijah and Christ **fasted**." Furthermore, Israel's probation in the wilderness lasted forty years; and forty years elapsed between the end of the ministry of Jesus Christ and the final overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem. When the flood came, it rained, a **rain of judgment** upon the earth, for a total of **forty days and forty nights**. Banks added that, "The number forty is considered the number of probation, testing, punishment, chastisement and humiliation. In New Testament times, those who were punished with stripes usually were given **"forty lashes, save one."**

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bcc/jonah-3.html>)

Jonah 3:5-6, So the **people of Nineveh** **believed God**, and **proclaimed a fast**, and put on **sackcloth (coarse loose cloth)**, 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**.

NOTE: So the **people of Nineveh believed God**,.... Or "in God" "in Deum", V. L. : in the word of the Lord, as the Targum; they believed there was a God, and that he, in whose name Jonah came, **was the true God**; they believed the word the prophet spake was NOT the WORD of MAN, but, the WORD of God; **FAITH came by hearing the word**, which is the **spring of true repentance**, and the **ROOT** of all good works.

and proclaimed a fast; NOT of themselves, but by the order of their king, as follows; though Kimchi thinks this was before that:

put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them; both, with respect to RANK and AGE, so universal were their fasting and mourning; in token of which they stripped themselves of their common and rich apparel, and clothed themselves with sackcloth; as was usual in extraordinary cases of **mourning**, NOT only with the Jews, but other nations.

(Jonah would be a quite a sight to behold. The **digestive juices** of the **fish** would have **turned his skin to a most unnatural colour** and his **hair** was most like all gone. Indeed,

anyone looking like that would attract your attention and give his message more credence (Belief; credit), especially after he told you what had happened to him. A God who creates storms, prepares large fish to swallow a man and preserves him IN the fish, would NOT likely have too much trouble destroying your city. Editor)

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/jonah-3.html>)

Thought 1. Notice, that these were NOT “People called by HIS name.” And NOR did “HIS people PRAY to him for them.” As we know, that set of verses was only for Israel, during the time of the Mosaic (Old) Covenant. At a time of Yahweh’s choosing, Jesus (Yahshua), his Son, came and died, and his blood brought into force a New Covenant.

NOTE: For word came unto the king of Nineveh,... Who was NOT Sardanapalus, a very dissolute prince, and abandoned to his lusts; but rather **Pul**, the same that came against **Menahem** king of Israel, 2 Kings 15:19, as Bishop Usher Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3233. Vid. Rollin's Ancient History, vol. 2. p. 30. thinks; to him news were brought that there was such a prophet come into the city, and published such and such things, which met with credit among the people; and that these, of all ranks and degrees, age and sex, were **afflicted** with it, and **thrown into the utmost concern** about it; so very swiftly did the ministry of Jonah spread in the city; and what he delivered was so quickly carried from one to another, that in ONE DAY'S TIME it **reached the palace**, and **the royal ear: and he arose from his throne**; where he sat in great majesty and splendour, encircled by his nobles, receiving their caresses and compliments; or, it may be, giving audience to foreign ambassadors, sent to court his friendship and alliance; or hearing causes, and redressing the grievances of his subjects...

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/jonah-3.html>)

Jonah 3:7, 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 any thing: let them **NOT feed, NOR drink water...**

Thought 1. This is probably a source for the error by some of today’s Christians who fast by NOT eating food, nor drinking water. Actually, during a fast, which means not eating food, we should always drink WATER. But, as we know, we can only do what we know.

NOTE: ...let them not feed, nor drink water." We shall not bother with noting various and sundry objections as to how Jonah might have known certain words used in this passage, such as robe, decree, etc. Jonah was an eyewitness of what he described in this passage; and the various unusual words used entered his vocabulary upon the same occasion as the events related.

What a bellowing must have gone up to God when none of the cattle were watered or fed.

Anyone who ever witnessed the **lowing of thirsty cattle** can never forget the terrible impact of it. This action initiated by the king was evidently designed to achieve just such **an impact** upon the **whole population**. The king's decree is continued in the next verse. The involvement of animals in the general mourning was NOT due to any notion that the animals had sinned; it was merely an Oriental custom.

"Herodotus relates that the Persians, when mourning for their general, **Masistios**, who had fallen in the battle of Platea, **shaved off** the **hair** from their **horses**, and adds, "Thus did the barbarians in their way, mourn for the deceased Masistios."

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/jonah-3.html>)

Jonah 3:8, 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 is in their hands.

NOTE: As the king was, and the people also were; and this order enjoined (commanded) the same to the beasts, horses, and camels, whose rich trappings were to be taken off, and

sackcloth put upon them, for the greater solemnity, of the mourning; as at this day, at the funerals of great persons, NOT only the **horses which draw the hearse** and **mourning**, coaches are covered with **black velvet**, to make the **solemnity** more awful: but others are led, clothed in like manner:

and cry mightily unto God; which clause stands so closely connected with the former, as if it respected beasts as well as men... ..but men are principally meant, at least who were to cry unto God intensely and earnestly, with great ardour, fervency, and importunity (urgent request); NOT only aloud, and with a strong voice, but with their whole heart, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; heartily, sincerely, and devoutly, for the **averting** (turning from) divine wrath, and the **pardon of their sins**, and the **sparing** of their city: **turn everyone from his evil way;** as well knowing that fasting and prayer would be of no avail, without leaving everyone their sinful courses, and **reforming** their **life** and **manners:** **and from the violence that is in their hands:** their rapine (seizing and carrying away of things by force) and oppression, their thefts and robberies, and preying upon the substance of others; which seem to be the reigning vices of this city, in doing which many **murders were committed** also; see Nahum 3:1...

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/jonah-3.html>)

Jonah 3:9, Who can tell if God will turn and **repent (pity)**, and turn away from his fierce **anger**, that WE **perish NOT**?

NOTE: ...it is only probable or possible he may; neither the light of nature nor the **law** of Moses connect repentance and remission of sins, it is the **Gospel does this**; and it is only by the **Gospel revelation** that any can be assured that God will forgive, even **penitent sinners**; however, this Heathen prince encourages his subjects NOT to despair of, but to hope for, the mercy of God, though they could NOT be sure of it...

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/jonah-3.html>)

2 Peter 3:8-9, But, beloved, be NOT **ignorant** of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is **NOT slack** concerning his **promise**, as some men count **slackness**; but is **longsuffering** to us-ward, NOT WILLING that **ANY** should **perish** (be lost eternally), but that **ALL** should come to **repentance**.

Jonah 3:10, And God **SAW** their **WORKS**, that they **turned FROM** their **EVIL way**; and God **repented (pity)** of (from) the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Thought 1. As we know, it was out of reverence for God, they turned from their evil ways.

Proverbs 16:6, By **MERCY** (loving-kindness, good deed, **pity** [compassion accompanied with some act of charity or benevolence]) and **TRUTH** iniquity is purged: and by the **FEAR** (reverence) of the Lord men depart from evil.

The question is HOW did God **EARN** reverence in their eyes?! Reverence is produced when the **Power**, **Authority**, **Sacredness**, or **Sublimeness** (that which is beyond the ordinary) that's possessed and **SHOWN** by God, or by anybody, is **SEEN** or **HEARD** about by people, who properly THINK about it! The acronym for this is **"PASS"**.

God revealed his Sacredness by making known his displeasure with their ways. So, they were quick to believe that he had the Power and Authority to destroy them! Sublimeness is seen in his mercy when he did NOT destroy them without warning, nor after they repented!

Jeremiah 9:24 ...let him that **glorieth** **glory** in this, that he **understandeth** and **knoweth ME**, That I am the Lord (Yahweh) which exercise **lovingkindness**, **judgment** (authority, **JUSTICE** [punishment, exoneration, **GOOD**, praise, approval]), and **righteousness**, in the earth: for **IN** these things **I delight**, saith the Lord (Yahweh).