

How God Restores Us

July 5, 2020 | Joel 2:1-27



In chapter 1, the prophet Joel called the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem to lament and return to the Lord during a time of national adversity. God was working in their day during the plague of locusts, calling the people to reach out to Him. In chapter 2, Joel warns the people about something worse: the impending invasion of a massive ferocious army coming from the north. And like the first disaster, it points forward to the coming day of the Lord.

Read Joel 2:1-11.

[Q] What are the hints in these verses that this coming disaster points beyond itself to the ultimate day of the Lord? What are the signs that an unrepeatable, world-ending disaster is coming?

[Q] What is the Lord's role in this coming disaster (v. 11)? Is that a surprise to you? What does this tell us?

Yet Even Now

Read Joel 2:12-17.

Joel doesn't give a specific reason as to why God is sending the disaster. He doesn't point to a particular sin that the Lord is addressing. But He does make it crystal clear how to respond.

[Q] Describe God's character from verses 12-14.

[Q] Read Exodus 34:6-7. What is it about God and His character that makes it worthwhile to return to Him?

True Repentance

[Q] Which would be easier: "rending (tearing) your heart" or "rending your garment" (Joel 2:13)? Why do you think God makes this distinction?

- 1) True repentance involves a sense of awareness of one's own guilt, sinfulness, and helplessness (Psalm 51:4-10; 109:21-22).
- 2) True repentance takes hold of God's mercy in Jesus Christ (Psalm 51:1; 130:4).

- 3) True repentance means a change of attitude and action regarding sin. Hatred of sin turns the repentant person away from his or her sin to God (Psalm 119:128; Job 42:5–6; 2 Corinthians 7:10).
- 4) True repentance results in a radical and persistent pursuit of holy living, walking with God in obedience to His commands (2 Timothy 2:19–22; 1 Peter 1:16).

From gotquestions.org/Bible-repentance

Apply

[Q] Which particular areas of your life, and particular types of sin, has God been calling to your mind as you have been reading Joel?

In what ways, big or small, have you drifted away from God, ignored His ways and gone your way, or neglected your relationship with Him?

“A person will be in a better position to repent if he is continually feeding on God’s truth through reading and studying the Bible, listening to biblical preaching and teaching, filling the mind with truth so that the mind begins to think the thoughts of God, and associating with like-minded Christians who will foster accountability. In some cases, a Christian may know that something is wrong and that she should change, but she doesn’t really want to. In that case, there is nothing wrong with praying, ‘Father, I know that I should change, but I am unwilling—please make me willing.’ ”

From gotquestions.org/how-to-repent

[Q] What will it look like for you to return to the Lord “with all your heart” and to “rend your heart” before Him? Why not look up the verses in the numbered section above and spend some time in prayer, offering your heart to Him?

The Lord Restores

Read Joel 2:18-27.

In verses 15-17, the people had gathered in a “sacred assembly” and the priests had cried out to the Lord on their behalf. Verse 18 tells us that the Lord heard the prayers of His priests.

[Q] Read Hebrews 7:23–28. How is Jesus a much better priest for us?

When we cry out to the Lord for salvation from His judgment, we do so through our much greater Priest, Jesus Himself. Rejoice that you have a High Priest in heaven who speaks on your behalf!

[Q] What insight does Joel 2:19-24 give us into life in the new creation? How do these verses teach and move us to respond to God’s abundant kindness?

[Q] Read Romans 5:5-8. How do Christians know that their “hope” (what they are trusting in) will not lead them to “shame”?

Download and read the article by Tim Keller: [All_of_Life_Is_Repentance-Keller.pdf](#)

Next week: Joel 2:28- 3:21- Joel envisions a day when God would pour out His Spirit.