

## “Returning to God” (Joel)

June 9, 2024

Joel interprets events not only as natural disasters, but as a national disaster.

The word given to the prophet Joel, by God, is to use these natural disasters as a warning. A preview of what is to come in the Day of the Lord if the people do not repent and turn back to God.

Joel calls for a national time of prayer and repentance. He calls the people to come before the Lord and pray for a spiritual awakening and renewal.

The prophets never left the people without hope. If the people respond as they should, if they will listen to the alarm, if they will come in repentance before God, their serious response will be the basis of blessing.

Joel tells them to rend their “hearts” and not their “garments.” God is not looking for “religious” actions. He is interested in heart attitudes that spill into the life of faith.

It is far more important that we come before the Lord with a broken heart because of our sin and the sin of the land. Religious motions are valueless if they do not stem from a heart that is deeply repentant.

Part of Joel’s message to the people is that they have become so immersed in the secular and social concerns of the day that they have left the Lord out of his position of Lordship in their lives.

If the Lord has slipped out of position of Lordship in our lives, return to him! And if the people will do this, they will rediscover the true nature of God.

Hosea told the people that their lack of knowledge of God had led to a lack of acknowledgement of God. Our view of God, our understanding of God, becomes dim when our hearts are far from him.

As God’s people return to him and acknowledge him, he will pour out his spirit on them. And as he pours out his spirit in their lives, they will begin, again, to speak and live the truth of God into a sinful and confused society. And as they do that, men and woman hear the message, turn to the Lord, and call on his name.

“Jehoshaphat” means “The Lord Judges.” It is also translated as the “Valley of Verdict,” or the “Valley of Decision.”

*“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.” Joel 3:14*

*“...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15*

- God is God and we had better start to take him seriously.
- God will triumph finally, and no one can stop that from happening.
- God’s judgement is absolutely certain and totally just.
- God is prepared to deal in grace and mercy with those who are truly repentant.

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