

TIMELESS TRUTHS FOR A CRUCIAL TIME

The Messages of Twelve Old Testament Prophets

Discussion Guide
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Sermon Title

The God of Second Chances

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Joel 1-4

Introduction: Joel was a prophet to Judah early in her development as a nation and offered the most wonderful hope for the future, a prophetic message for the end times, and a comforting message of restoration to all who will turn to the Lord.

Sermon Outline

I. Jehovah is God—The Times of Joel the Prophet

- A. A prophet to Judah during the reign of Joash around 820BC
 - 1. Joash became king at age 7
 - 2. Jehoiada, his uncle and the high priest, was a godly man and the primary governor of the kingdom of Judah
- B. While Assyria and Babylon were not serious threats at the time, Judah's neighbors were, including Egypt and Syria
- C. A devastating locust plague had destroyed crops followed by a severe draught which left Judah in dire straits and on the verge of starvation

II. The Prophecy of Joel & the Sovereignty of Jehovah

- A. The book is fairly evenly divided with 37 verses related to judgment and 36 verses related to the promise of great deliverance
- B. The locust plague and draught occupy chapter one
- C. The future Day of the Lord will be even worse (2:1-11) [apocalyptic]
- D. There is great hope in genuine repentance (2:12-27)
- E. The future is filled with great promise, a Pentecostal age! (3:1-5)
- F. The final Day of the Lord will provide deliverance for the people of God and devastation for the enemies of God (4:1-21)

III. The Wonderful Message of God: He Offers a Second Chance (2:12-27)

- A. A call for genuine, heart-felt repentance (12-17)
 - 1. Key verse (13) Rend your hearts and not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God. For gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment.
 - 2. Genuine repentance stirs the heart of God (18)
- B. In returning to the Lord there is a promise of blessing (19-24)
 - 1. Needs will be met (19, 23-24)
 - 2. Enemies will be defeated (20-21)
- C. There are no wasted years with God, He is the God of second chances (25-27)
 - 1. He will restore the years that the locust has eaten and the drought consumed (25)
 - 2. You will have your hunger satisfied and your soul's longings met (26)
 - 3. You will have a great sense of God's Presence in your life (27)

Conc: God is the Redeemer, the Great Healer, and the Restorer of lost value. He can recover a life and make the latter years more wonderful than we can imagine. He can restore the years of loss and dryness with abundance of blessings and fruit. He can wipe away the tears and the shame and fill us with gladness of heart, the joy of the Lord. Do not resist Him in the day He calls, He will redeem your life!

The word of the LORD that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel:

² Hear this, O elders, And listen, all inhabitants of the land.

Has anything like this happened in your days

Or in your fathers' days?

³ Tell your sons about it,

And let your sons tell their sons,

And their sons the next generation.

Joel 1: 1-3 (NASB)

Gird yourselves with sackcloth

And lament, O

priests;

Wail, O ministers of the altar!

Come, spend the

night in sackcloth

O ministers of my

God,

For the grain offering

and the drink offer-

ing

Are withheld from the

house of your God.

¹⁴ Consecrate a fast,

Proclaim a solemn assembly;

Gather the elders

And all the inhabi-

tants of the land

To the house of the

LORD your God,

And cry out to the

LORD.

¹⁵ Alas for the day!

For the day of the

LORD is near,

And it will come as

destruction from the

Almighty.

Joel 1: 13-15 (NASB)

4.) Is God obligated to restore the years the locust has eaten? Why does He do so?

5.) What is the best understanding of the phrase, “rend your hearts and not your garments”? How do you apply that to your life?

6.) According to Joel 2:14, what is the natural, first response for those whose lives have been blessed and restored by the Lord?

7.) In your own life how have you seen God restore the years the locust has eaten? When have you received a second chance that you knew you did not deserve and then experienced blessings that truly amazed you?

*"It will come about after this
That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind;
And your sons and daughters will prophesy,
Your old men will dream dreams,
Your young men will see visions.*

*²⁹ "Even on the male and female servants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.*

*³⁰ "I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth,
Blood, fire and columns of smoke.*

*³¹ "The sun will be turned into darkness
And the moon into blood
Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.*

*³² "And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Will be delivered;
For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem*

*There will be those who escape,
As the LORD has said,
Even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.*

*¹ "For behold, in those days and at that time,
When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,*

*² I will gather all the nations
And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.*

*Then I will enter into judgment with them there
On behalf of My people and My inheritance,
Israel,
Whom they have scattered among the nations;
And they have divided up My land.*

Joel 2: 28-3: 2 (NASB)

