



The Common Thread

"Joel: Return to Me"

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Return - Go back, to come back, to arrive back,

Joel 2:12-13 NLT - That is why the LORD says, "Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead." Return to the LORD your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.

The central message of Joel is that of salvation amid judgment.

In Eden, God brought forth a flourishing, vibrant paradise and life so comfortable, aka normal.

The day of the Lord, lest we think that we are exempt there's going to come a day whether we think futuristic, or in our current state that judgment for our sins will come to us! (Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14).

The tendency to try to get by on mere ritual is common to fallen human nature, and wherever the church exists in the world it must guard against this.

Yet even amid this sin, God will spare those who repent and turn to him (2:12–14). God "will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten" (2:25).

God shows us history and currently his far-reaching grace in the midst of judgment.

Judgment is inevitable. Judgment will come both upon all those who reject God outright as well as on those who claim to know him yet who have resisted true repentance, choosing instead to worship him in a merely formal, external, and hollow way. Divine justice will overtake every unrepentant sinner, regardless of class, ethnicity, or culture. Injustice will be defeated, and the Lord will establish his righteous reign.

- Human sin and failure bring destruction.
- God longs to show mercy and grace to those who will just confess and own up to their sin.
- There is hope that God will destroy the evil in us and the world one-day and make all things new.