

“Turn to Me!”**1. Intro:**

- 1.1. **Blow the shofar** – Means? – To alarm, or to Gather.

2. ALARM! (1-14)

- 2.1. Right up front let me say that some scholars think Joel is describing only a **locust swarm**, some think an **invasion** by Assyria or Babylon, still others of the **coming day of the Lord...so which is it?**

2.1.1. **I believe all 3!**

2.1.2. Joel described in ch.1 the locust swarm. Now he sounds the warning of the coming “day of the Lord”. Still using Locust analogies.

2.1.2.1. Let's **read** vs.1-11

2.1.3. See “**day of the Lord**” bookends(1 & 11).

2.1.4. Joel depicted what the locust **look like**(4); **sound like**(5); & **approach like**(7-9).

2.1.4.1. They say a locust swarms noise can be **heard** 6 miles off! And has been likened unto a loud **waterfall**, a **torrent**, a **rushing wind**, or a **raging flame**.

2.2. (10) A desert locust swarm that crossed the Red Sea in 1889 was estimated to cover **2,000 square miles**. [Zondervan Pict. Encyc. Pg.949]

2.3. (11) It is a day in which Jehovah will **break silence & intervene** in history to **judge** both **Israel & the gentile nations**.

2.3.1. **A couple reminders:** **[1]** the day of the Lord's is a day of **God's** judgment. **[2]** The day is **still future**. **[3]** It is **accompanied by** a time of **great trouble** on earth. **[4]** It is to be **followed by** the **reign** of God through his Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.4. Joel is again sounding an alarm so those facing the 2nd or greater invasion might **get ready for it!**

2.5. Joel's Goal...Repentance! (12-14)

- 2.5.1. At the 11th hour, when destruction seems imminent!
- 2.5.2. So this is no surprise why this next section deals with repentance!
 - 2.5.2.1. A little different from Jonah's message of, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" (i.e. he wasn't going to give them any hints about possible repentance & forgiveness)
- 2.5.3. Joel 1st gives an **analysis** of true repentance (12,13a), & then **incentives** for it(13b,14)!
 - 2.5.4. **Analysis!**
 - 2.5.4.1. Outward expressions of an inward state are both **right & valuable**.
 - 2.5.4.2. But what Joel is **against** is outward expression that **does not** correspond with reality.
 - 2.5.4.3. It is a whole lot easier for us to do the opposite...to rend our **garments** instead of our **hearts!** – But God wants us heartbroken!
 - 2.5.4.4. Turn back a page to **Hosea 14:1,2** for a perfect description of true repentance!
 - 2.5.4.4.1. They include **acknowledging** sin; **confessing** it; & an **appeal** to God not based upon our good works(based solely on His grace!)
 - 2.5.4.5. This is what **Joel** wanted to see, this is still what **God** wants to see in us today!... "ALL your heart!"
 - 2.5.4.5.1. All of your emotions, personality, intellect, affections, thoughts, & your will...centered upon the Lord.
 - 2.5.4.5.2. Turn to me with a **Total heart**(12 "all"); w/a **Torn heart**(13a "rend"); w/a **Turned heart**(13b "return").
 - 2.5.4.6. [1] Confess specific sins!
 - 2.5.4.6.1. Is it really repenting when we generically say I'm sorry? {It begs the question: what are you repenting of?}
 - 2.5.4.7. [2] Genuine Sorrow!
 - 2.5.4.7.1. **Ps.51:17** "The sacrifices of God are a **broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart**; These, O God, You will not despise."
 - 2.5.4.7.2. **Contrition** is deeper than **regret!** – It is sensing our guilt & weeping within.
 - 2.5.4.7.3. "Blessed are the **poor in spirit**,...Blessed are those who **mourn**(over sin),"
 - 2.5.4.7.4. To "mourn over our sins" has been explained, like a **spiritual winter**. Then comes the **springtime** of God's comfort!

2.5.4.8. [3] Conversion!

2.5.4.8.1. Joel uses **turn & return!**2.5.4.8.2. **Convert** – (Latin) con=around & ver=to turn {to turn around}.2.5.4.8.3. **Repentance** – refers to a change of mind. (a change so basic that the direction of one's life is altered)2.5.4.8.4. **Forsake your self-chosen paths of rebellion; come to your senses; recognize me as your God; & follow my instructions!**2.5.4.8.5. It's like this: **You are facing yourself, ... behind you is the Lord Jesus Christ...turn around!**2.5.5. **Incentives!**2.5.5.1. **Read** vs. 13b. {It doesn't get better than this!}2.5.5.2. **Gracious** – Inclined to pardon the repentant sinner.2.5.5.3. **Merciful** – Possessing mercy in abundance.2.5.5.4. **Slow to anger** – (Wycliffe) "The Lord does not permit his anger to break forth immediately as an **avalanche** upon the discovery of sin, but he waits to see if the sinner will repent."2.6. (13) "**Relents**" – How does God repent/relent?2.6.1. God doesn't change his **mind** but he does change His **attitudes & actions**.2.6.1.1. So it seems that God is here depicted in terms of **the human** experience of knowledge & emotion.

2.6.1.2. The immutable & sovereign God deals appropriately with changes of human behavior.

2.6.1.3. (i.e.) *When man repents God "changes His mind" with regard to the blessing or punishment appropriate to the situation.*2.7. "God's judgment is a **waiting, wise** judgment. It is never at the mercy of an **irrational temper, impulsiveness, or misinformation**. It always responds at exactly the **right time & in exactly the right measure**. And when His people repent, God's judgment steps aside to let His **mercy & grace** flow!"¹**3. ASSEMBLY! (15-17)**3.1. (16) The **gladness** of the bridegroom & his bride are exchanged for **sincere sadness**.3.2. "**Where is their God**"(17) is answered in the next section.¹ Chuck Swindoll; pg.17,18. Vol.3

4. **ANSWER! (18-27)**

- 4.1. Here is the turning point of this book.
- 4.2. “We had an **Alarm & the Assembly**; now we have the **Answer** from the Lord!”²
- 4.3. (19) Joel had faith.... “**The Lord will answer!**”
- 4.4. (21-27) God was not only to drive away the locust of judgment & restore the pastures, but also bless them with “Bumper Crops” & even make up for wasted years(25)!
- 4.5. (25) You can’t have your time back but there is a strange & wonderful way in which God can give back to you the wasted blessings.
 - 4.5.1. We have a God who delights in impossibilities & who asks, “**Is anything too hard for me?**”(Jer.33:27)
 - 4.5.2. Phillips Brooks said, “...the only way to get rid of your past is to make a future out of it. God will waste nothing.”
- 4.6. (25b) **My great army which I sent among you** –
 - 4.6.1. Hos.6:1 “**Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up.**”
- 4.7. (27) Why is he going to bless them so much? Because they **deserve it...no way!** - But so other nations would know **He is the Lord!**
 - 4.7.1. Here is one of the strongest statements of mono-theism in the whole O.T.
 - 4.7.1.1. Coming back from India I understand this clearly.
 - 4.7.2. This refers back to the 1st of the 10 commandments.
 - 4.7.2.1. Ex.20:2,3 “**I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. "You shall have no other gods before Me.**”
 - 4.7.2.2. If one worships the one true God & Him only, then the moral standards of this God will inevitably guide the worshiper in other areas.

² WWW

- 4.7.3. **Q:** What if I don't worship Baal, Zeus, or Molech?
- 4.7.3.1. We break it whenever we give **some person** or **some thing** 1st place in our affections that belong to God alone.
- 4.7.3.2. Maybe this substitute is "**yourself**" or **your opinion of yourself!**
- 4.7.3.3. Maybe it is **success, material possessions, fame, or personal power over others.**
- 4.7.4. Jesus said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your **heart**, with all your **soul**, and with all your **mind.**" "This is the first and great commandment.
- 4.7.5. We need to **see all things** from this vantage point! – This should be our **guide** our **aim**. – To put Him 1st in **thoughts; word & deed; in business & leisure; in friendships & career; in the use of our money; time & talents; at work & at home...WHY???**
- 4.7.5.1. Because of **who God is** & because of **what he has done!**
- 4.7.6. **Who God is:**
- 4.7.6.1. He is w/o beginning & end "I am who I am".
- 4.7.6.2. He is self-existent. No one created Him.
- 4.7.6.3. he is self-sufficient. He needs no one.
- 4.7.6.4. Any god less then this is no God!
- 4.7.6.5. It is because of **WHO He is** that demands our worship!
- 4.7.7. **What He has done:**
- 4.7.7.1. This applies primarily to **Israel** who was delivered from slavery from Egypt (Ex.20). But it also applies to any who have experienced deliverance, whether from **death** or **slavery**, or **poverty** or **disease**. In addition the deliverance must also apply to **spiritual** matters.