

## ***What the Lord Is Saying about the Crisis in Our Nation (Joel 2)***

### **I. RECEIVING INSTRUCTION FROM THE BOOK OF JOEL**

- A. The Psalm 2 crisis requires a Joel 2 response, resulting in an Acts 2 outpouring of the Spirit.
- B. The Spirit is calling the Church to *understand* the coming revival and crisis and to *respond* in the way that Scripture teaches. God requires the response outlined in the book of Joel (2:12-17). We are to turn to God with all of our heart and pray for a great outpouring of the Spirit (2:28-31).
- <sup>1</sup>“Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble...<sup>11</sup>For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?<sup>12</sup>‘Now, therefore,’ says the LORD, ‘Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning’...<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly...<sup>28</sup>And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...<sup>30</sup>I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth...<sup>31</sup>before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.” (Joel 2:1-31)*
- C. The theme of the book of Joel is the day of the Lord (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14). This “day” speaks of a time *when God intervenes in history with unusual manifestations of power on behalf of His people and against His enemies*. It is “His day” because His power is displayed for all to see.
- D. ***A great Day (2:11)***: Those who love Jesus will witness the greatest outpouring of the Spirit in history leading to His return. In this great revival, the Spirit will release the miracles that were seen in the book of Acts and in the book of Exodus, combined and multiplied on a global scale.
- E. ***A very terrible Day (2:11)***: Those who rebel against Jesus in that hour will experience the most severe time of judgment in history. Jesus spoke of this as an unprecedented time of trouble. The Lord will shake all nations in the context of multitudes coming to Jesus (Heb. 12:26; Rev. 7:14).
- <sup>14</sup>And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world...then the end will come...<sup>21</sup>Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world. (Mt. 24:14, 21)*
- <sup>7</sup>“I will shake all nations, and they shall come to [Jesus] the Desire of All Nations.” (Hag 2:7)*
- F. The Lord will anoint *Day-of-the-Lord messengers* who will inspire and alarm God’s people and cause their hearts to be strong in faith with trembling. These forerunners will proclaim both the *great* and *terrible* aspects of the Day of the Lord. Jesus taught that the “wheat” and “tares” will grow together and mature and be harvested at the end of the age (Mt. 13:30, 39; Rev. 14:14-20). Day-of-the-Lord preachers have never been popular, but they have been used to change history.
- G. Forerunners are “messengers” who function with a specific message in different spheres of life. For example, they are preachers, evangelists, artists (singers, musicians, actors, etc.), writers (Internet), in media or business, or intercessors, as well as those who disciple people one on one in the church, university, or home (moms and dads are some of the most important forerunners).

## II. THE RESPONSE THAT GOD REQUIRES: SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES

- A. The Lord tells His people how to respond in a national crisis (when there is no human remedy) in a way that results in Him intervening with great power, mercy, and deliverance. Joel summoned people to return to God with confidence that He is gracious, kind and relents from doing harm.
- <sup>12</sup>“Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” <sup>13</sup>So rend your heart...return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. <sup>14</sup>Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing...? <sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; <sup>16</sup>gather the people...<sup>17</sup>let them say, “Spare Your people, O Lord”...<sup>28</sup>Afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...<sup>30</sup>I will show wonders...<sup>31</sup>before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.” (Joel 2:12-31)*
- B. *Relents from doing harm:* The Lord is willing to cancel the judgment that He decreed in heaven. God desires to transform a would-be disaster zone into a revival center. There are two stages in God’s decreed judgments: first, a decree of judgment is established in His heavenly court; second, it is issued as God releases angels to execute the judgment (Ezek. 9), or it is canceled.
- <sup>1</sup>Gather yourselves together...<sup>2</sup>before the decree [of judgment] is issued...before the LORD’s fierce anger comes upon you...<sup>3</sup>Seek the LORD ...it may be that you will be hidden [protected from judgment] in the day of the LORD’s anger. (Zeph. 2:1-3)*
- <sup>7</sup>“I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city.” (Amos 4:7)*
- C. *A national disaster can be stopped.* In response to prayer, God heals nations and changes the crisis that would have occurred (Gen. 18:22-32; Ex. 32: 9-14; 2 Chr. 34:22-28; Jer. 18:7-10; 51:6-8; Ezek. 18:21-28; 33:10-14; Dan. 4:29; Amos 5:14-15; 7:1-6; Jon. 3:4-10; Mal. 3:16-4:6).
- <sup>14</sup>If My people...will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear...and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (2 Chr. 7:14)*
- <sup>7</sup>The instant I speak concerning a nation...to destroy it, <sup>8</sup>if that nation...turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. (Jer. 18:7-8)*
- <sup>27</sup>“...because your [Josiah] heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place [Jerusalem]...<sup>28</sup>... your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants.” (2 Chr. 34:27-28)*
- D. The Lord searches for intercessors who will pray for His judgments to be withheld (Ezek. 22:30). He protected those who cried out (intercessors) from His judgment on Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:4-6)
- <sup>30</sup>So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. (Ezek. 22:30)*
- <sup>4</sup>“Go through the midst of...Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.” <sup>5</sup>To the others He said in my hearing, “Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare...” (Ezek. 9:4-5)*