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God's Merciful Love

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Joel 2:12-13, 18-19, 28-32

Introduction: The prophet sounds the **ALARM** of a **dreadful calamity**, the description of which is most terribly worked up, Joel 2:1-11. Exhortation to repentance, fasting, and prayer, that the **Divine judgments** may be averted, Joel 2:12-17. God will in **DUE TIME take vengeance** on all the **ENEMIES** of PURE and undefiled **RELIGION**, Joel 2:18-20. Great prosperity of the Jews subsequent to their **return from** the Babylonish captivity, Joel 2:21-27. Joel then makes an elegant transition to the **outpouring** of the **Holy Ghost** on the **day of Pentecost**, Joel 2:28-30; for so these verses are explained by one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. See Acts 2:16-21. Prophecy concerning the **destruction of Jerusalem**, which was shortly to follow the opening of the Gospel dispensation, Acts 2:31. Promises of safety to the faithful and penitent; promises afterwards remarkably fulfilled to the **Christians** in their **escape** to **Pella** from the desolating **sword** of the **Roman army**, Acts 2:32.
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/joel-2.html>)

Joel 2:1-11, Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an ALARM (give notice to (any one) of approaching DANGER) in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the **DAY of the LORD** cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A **day of darkness** and of **gloominess**, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A **fire** devoureth before them; and behind them a **flame burneth**: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and **nothing shall escape them.**

The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in **battle** array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall NOT be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

The **earth shall quake** before them; the **heavens shall tremble**: the SUN and the MOON shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: And the LORD shall utter his voice before **his ARMY**: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that **executeth his word**: for the **day of the LORD** (Yahweh) is **great** and **very terrible**; and who can abide it?

NOTE: The prophet had described at length the coming of **God's judgments**, as a mighty army. But lest amid the judgments, people should, (as they often do) forget the Judge, he

represents God, as commanding this His army, gathering, ordering, marshalling, directing them, giving them the word, when and upon whom they should pour themselves. ...God had spoken, and His people **had not obeyed; NOW He speaks NOT** to them anymore, but to **their enemies**. He calls the Medes and Persians, "My sanctified ones, My mighty ones" Isaiah 13:3, when they were to exercise His judgments on Babylon; and our Lord calls the Romans His armies. "He sent forth His armies and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city" Matthew 22:7.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bnb/joel-2.html>)

Joel 2:12-13, Therefore also now, saith **the LORD** (Yahweh), **turn ye** even to me with **all** your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And **rend** your heart, and **NOT** your garments, and **TURN unto** the LORD (Yahweh) your God: for he is **gracious** and **merciful**, **slow to anger**, and of **great kindness**, and **repenteth him** of the evil.

NOTE: Therefore - (And) now also All this being so, one way of escape there is, **TRUE repentance**. As if God said, "All this I have therefore spoken, in order to terrify you by My threats. Wherefore "turn unto Me with all your hearts," and show the **penitence** of your **minds** "by fasting and weeping and mourning," that, fasting now, ye may "be filled" hereafter "weeping now," ye may laugh hereafter; mourning now, ye may hereafter "be comforted" Luke 6:21; Matthew 5:4.

PENITENCE, repentance; PAIN; sorrow OR GRIEF of heart for sins or offenses; CONTRITION.

REAL **PENITENCE** springs from a **CONVICTION** of GUILT and **INGRATITUDE** to God, and is followed by AMENDMENT of life.

And since it is **your custom "to rend your garments" in sorrow**, I command you to rend, not them but your hearts which are FULL of SIN, which, like bladders, unless they be opened, will burst of themselves. And when ye have done this, return unto the Lord your God, whom your former sins aleinated from you; and despair not of pardon for the greatness of your guilt, for mighty mercy will blot out mighty sins."

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bnb/joel-2.html>)

Joel 2:14-17, Who knoweth if he will **return** and **repent**, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? **Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a FAST, call a solemn assembly:** Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the **priests, the ministers** of the LORD, **WEEP** between the PORCH and the ALTAR, and let them say, **Spare thy people, O LORD**, and give NOT thine heritage **to reproach**, that the **heathen** should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

NOTE: Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch... The porch in this, Solomon's temple, was in fact a TOWER, in front of the HOLY of HOLIES, of the same breadth with the temple, namely, 20 cubits, and its depth half its breadth, namely, 10 cubits 1 Kings 6:3, and its height 120 cubits, the whole "overlaid within with **pure gold**" 2 Chronicles 3:4. The **brass altar** for burnt-offerings stood in front of it 2 Chronicles 8:12. ...The space then between the porch and the altar was enclosed on those two sides 2 Chron. 7:7; it became an inner part of the court of the priests. Through it the priests or the high priest passed, whenever they went to **sprinkle the blood**, **typifying** (symbolizing) the **atonement**, before the veil of the tabernacle, or for any other office of the tabernacle. It seems to have been a **place of prayer for the priests**. ... **Here the priests**, with their faces toward the **holy of holies** and the **temple** which He had filled with His Glory, were to WEEP.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bnb/joel-2.html>)

Joel 2:18, Then will **the LORD** (Yahweh) be **jealous (zealous** [filled with ZEAL {eagerness in FAVOR of a person or cause }]) **FOR** his land, and **PITY** his people.

NOTE: "Apparently Joel had been successful in inspiring the people of Judah to repent sincerely, for here we are told that, "The Lord became **jealous FOR** his land." Two motives may be assigned to God as reasons for his "repentance" of the threatened disaster:

"The first is JEALOUSY, the dishonor done to his name must be forever removed; the second, his pity, which has been stirred by the PENITENCE of his afflicted people."

It should be observed that none of this could be applied to the **locust plague**, a disaster which was **already present**; but it indicates that the **ultimate destruction** of **Israel** and **their removal** to other nations **as captives**, the more terrible judgment of which the locust plague was a SYMBOL - that disaster was indeed averted (ward off, or prevent) for the time. The failure to see this second chapter as the prophecy of a **far greater judgment** than that of the locusts results in the interpretation of these verses (Joel 2:18-27) as a statement of God's promise to remove the terrible scourge of the locusts, or to bring about the cessation of it. Deere commented thus:

"Evidently the people responded to the prophet's invitation. The solemn convocation was convened; the **people repented**; and **the Lord forgave them**. Consequently, he **NOW** promises to REMOVE the LOCUSTS and RESTORE the prosperity of the land. Now all will know that God Himself dwells with his people."^[29]

This is, of course, correct as far as it goes; but the great damage of the locust plague still remained; and it is better to view the removal of the locusts as **a symbol** of a **lifting** of that **greater doom impending**, which eventually came, in the INVASION of Assyrians and Babylonians. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/joel-2.html>)

Joel 2:19-21, Yea, **the LORD** (Yahweh) **will answer** and **say** unto HIS people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and **I will NO MORE** make you a **reproach** among the **heathen**: But **I will remove far off** from you the **northern army**, and will **drive him** into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and **his STINK** shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things. **Fear NOT**, O land; **be GLAD** and **rejoice**: for the LORD (Yahweh) will do great things.

NOTE: This is a prophetic **double entendre** (double meaning), rather than a problem." Not only did the worst locust plagues usually descend on Jerusalem from the **north**, but, "It was ALSO TRUE that **Israel's main invaders**: Aram, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome **ALL attacked from the north.**" What is evidently in view in this passage is that the summary end of the locust plague which resulted from their being carried by strong winds into the seas, is cited as a pledge that the greater judgment of invasion has also been averted. The use of the military words "the northern army" precludes (stops) the limitation of this to the locust scourge. Even the expressions "forepart" and "hinder part" are "more applicable to a **human army's van and rear**, than to **locusts.**"¹ (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/joel-2.html>)

Joel 2:22-29, Be NOT afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. **Be glad** then, ye children of Zion, and **rejoice** in the LORD (Yahweh) your God: for he hath given you the **former rain** moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

And the floors shall be full of **wheat**, and the **fats** shall overflow with **wine** and **oil**. And I will **RESTORE to you** the years that the **locust** hath eaten, the **cankerworm**, and the **caterpillar**, and the **palmerworm**, **my great army** which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD (Yahweh) your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

And ye shall **KNOW** that I am in the midst of Israel, and that **I am** the LORD (Yahweh) your God, and none else: and MY people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass **afterward**, that I will pour out my spirit upon **all flesh**; and your **SONS** and your **DAUGHTERS** shall **PROPHECY**, your **old men** shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the **servants** and upon the **handmaids** in **those days** will I **pour OUT MY spirit**.

NOTE: It shall come to pass AFTERWARD: AFTER the restoration Joel spoke of previously in the chapter, there will come a time of ULTIMATE restoration and blessing. This latter time will be marked by an outpouring of God's Spirit on **all flesh** - NOT ONLY selected men (people) at selected times for selected duties.
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/guz/joel-2.html>)

Acts 2:1-6, And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with **one ACCORD** in one place. And **suddenly** there came a **sound** from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them **cloven tongues** like as of **fire**, and it sat upon each of them. And they were ALL **filled** with the Holy Ghost, and began to **speak** with other **tongues**, as the Spirit GAVE THEM **utterance** (articulation). And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man **heard them speak** in his **own language**.

Thought 1. This manifestation is known as **divers kinds** of tongues, one of the nine gifts of Spirit. It can be languages of men, or of angels. (1 Cor. 12:10, 13:1) The Lord (Yahweh), by his Spirit, gave them the utterance (articulation) to speak of his works in a language that was "supernaturally acquired" for the purpose of being a "SIGN" to produce reverence and arrest their attention so when the gospel was preached, they'd have HIGH regard for the speaker and God's words. Also notice they were NOT "preaching" the gospel in "divers kind of tongues." Preaching would be done by Peter, and others, in their OWN naturally acquired language. So, this gift is NOT a manifestation for **preaching** in other languages.

NOTE: ...A very excellent statement of the full meaning of this passage was given thus by R. J. Knowling:

"Peter saw in the outpouring of the Spirit the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) and the **DAWN** of the period **PRECEDING** the **RETURN of Christ in glory**."
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/joel-2.html>)

Acts 2:14-17, But **Peter**, standing up with the eleven, **lifted up his voice**, and **SAID** unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to **my words**: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the **third hour** of the day. (9:00 am) But this is **THAT** which was spoken by the **prophet Joel**; And it shall come to pass in the **LAST DAYS**, saith God, I will pour out of MY Spirit UPON **all flesh**: and your **SONS** and your **DAUGHTERS** shall **PROPHECY**, and your young men shall SEE visions, and your old men shall dream dreams...

Prophecy defined 4395, to foretell events, divine, speak under inspiration, exercise the prophetic office: -- prophecy (in Scripture, to **PREACH**; to instruct in religious doctrines; to interpret or explain Scripture or religious subjects; to exhort).

Joel 2:30-31, And I will **SHEW wonders** in the **heavens** and in the **earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke**. The **sun** shall be turned into **darkness**, and the **moon** into **blood**, **BEFORE** the **great** and the **terrible DAY of the LORD COME**.

NOTE: There is a **GREAT** and **TERRIBLE DAY of the Lord COMING**, which shall be ushered in with wonders in heaven and earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke, the turning of the sun into darkness and the moon into blood. This is to have its full accomplishment (as the learned Dr. Pocock thinks) in the **day of judgment, at the END of time**, before which these signs will be performed in the letter of them, yet so that it was accomplished **in part** in the **death of Christ** (which is called the judgment of this world, when the earth quaked and the sun was darkened, and a great and terrible day it was), and more fully in the **destruction of Jerusalem**, which was a **TYPE** and **FIGURE** of the **general judgment**, and before which there were many amazing prodigies (something extraordinary, or out of the usual course of nature, from which omens [SIGNS of some future event] are drawn), **besides** the convulsions of states and kingdoms **prophesied of** under the figurative expressions of turning the sun into darkness and the moon into blood, and the wars and rumours of wars, and distress of nations, which our Saviour spoke of as the beginning of these sorrows, Matt. 24:6,7. But **BEFORE** the **LAST judgment** there will be wonders indeed in heaven and earth, the dissolution of both, without a metaphor. The **judgments of God** upon a **sinful world**, and the frequent destruction of wicked kingdoms by fire and sword, are **prefaces** (forerunners [SIGN foreshowing something to follow]) to and **presages** (present fact indicating something to come) of the judgment of the world in the **LAST DAY**. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/joel-2.html>)

Amos 5:18-20, Woe unto you that DESIRE the **DAY of the LORD!** to what end is it for you? the **DAY of the LORD** is **darkness**, and **NOT light**. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a **serpent** bit him. Shall **NOT** the day of the LORD **be darkness**, and **NOT light?** even **VERY DARK**, and **NO brightness** in it?

Zephaniah 1:7-8, Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the **DAY** of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared **a sacrifice**, he hath bid his guests. And it shall come to pass in the **DAY of the LORD'S** sacrifice, that I will **PUNISH** the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

NOTE: All which God had **threatened** in the **LAW** shall be **fulfilled**. God, in the fulfillment of the **punishment**, which He had foretold in the law Lev. 26:32-33... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/zephaniah-1.html>)

Leviticus 26:27-28, 32-33, And if ye will **NOT** for all this **hearken** unto me, but walk contrary unto me; Then I will walk contrary unto you also in **FURY**; and I, even I, will **chastise** (**PUNISH**) you seven times for your sins. ... And I will bring the land into desolation: and your **enemies** which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will **scatter you** among the **heathen**, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

Zephaniah 1:14, 17-18, The **great DAY of the LORD** is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall **CRY** there bitterly.

...And I **will bring distress** upon men, that they shall **walk** like **blind** men, because they have SINNED against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall **be able to deliver them** in the **day** of the **LORD'S wrath (ANGER)**; but the whole land shall **BE devoured** by the **FIRE** of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Zephaniah 2:1-3, **Gather** yourselves together, yea, **gather together**, O **nation** NOT desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the **CHAFF**, before the fierce **ANGER** of the LORD (Yahweh) come upon you, before the day of the **LORD'S**

(Yahweh) **anger** come upon you. **Seek** ye the LORD (Yahweh), all ye **meek (HUMBLE)** of the earth, which have wrought his **JUDGMENT**; **SEEK** righteousness, **SEEK meekness (humility)**:
it may be YE shall **be HID** in the **DAY of the LORD'S ANGER.**

NOTE: It may be ye shall be hid - (Isaiah 26:20; Amos 5:6). This phrase does not imply doubt of the deliverance of the godly, but expresses the difficulty of it, as well that the ungodly may see the certainty of their DOOM, as also that the **faithful** may value the more the **GRACE** of God in their case (1 Peter 4:17-19)... and be stirred up to greater diligence to make their **calling** and **election SURE** (Calvin). (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/zephaniah-2.html>)

Thought 1. Christ comforted his church by what was written about the DAY of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-4, But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have NO need that I write unto you. For yourselves **KNOW** perfectly that the **DAY of the LORD** so **cometh** as a **THIEF** in the NIGHT. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then **SUDDEN destruction** cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall NOT escape. But ye, brethren, are NOT in darkness, that **that DAY** should overtake you as a **thief.**

2 Peter 3:8-13, But, **beloved,** be NOT **ignorant** of this one thing, that ONE DAY is with the Lord as a THOUSAND YEARS, and a THOUSAND YEARS as ONE DAY. The Lord is **NOT slack** concerning his **promise**, as some men count **slackness**; but is **longsuffering** to US-WARD, NOT willing that any should PERISH (be lost eternally), but that ALL should come to **repentance.**

But the **DAY of the LORD** will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass AWAY with a great **noise**, and the **ELEMENTS** shall **MELT (unloose, dissolve)** (1. to liquefy 2. to disunite [to disunite particles of MATTER) with fervent HEAT the **earth** and the **WORKS** that are therein shall be **BURNED up.**

Seeing then that ALL these things shall be **dissolved**, what manner of persons ought YE to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the **DAY of GOD**, wherein the heavens being on FIRE shall be dissolved, and the elements shall **MELT** with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **NEW heavens** and a **NEW earth**, wherein dwelleth **righteousness.**

Revelation 6:12-17, And I beheld when he had **opened** the **sixth seal**, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the **SUN** became black as sackcloth of hair, and the **MOON** became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, **hid themselves** in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, AND from the wrath of the Lamb:

For the **great DAY of his wrath** is **COME**; and who shall be able to stand?

Joel 2:32, And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever** shall **CALL ON the name (authority)** of the LORD (Yahweh) **shall be DELIVERED:** for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be **deliverance**, as the LORD (Yahweh) hath said, and in the **remnant** whom the LORD shall call.

Thought 1. On the day of Pentecost, as he preached, Peter also spoke of this verse.

Acts 2:21, And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever** shall **CALL ON** the **name** of the **Lord (supreme [Highest] in authority)** shall **be SAVED.**