

Lent 2022 - Longing for Justice - Part 5
The Day of Justice Will Come
Joel
April 3, 2022

I. PAIN that brings PERSPECTIVE. (Chapter 1-2)

- A. A WORLD that has been DECIMATED. (1:1-12)**
- B. Loss makes SPACE for REPENTANCE. (1:13-20)**
- C. SEEING a larger PATTERN. (2:1-17)**

Joel is a very interesting prophet. He has lived through a devastating locust plague and the pain the country is feeling has caused him to reflect on the purifying judgment of God. Our world is suffering as well, so it's fitting as we progress through Lent to explore what this pain is teaching us.

1. Kids Question: What's an event that you have looked forward to for a long time? What was it like when the day actually came?
2. When has loss made space for you to see life differently? What was that like?

II. The DAY of the LORD. (1:15, 2:1,11,31, 3:14)

- A. A CONCEPT loaded with MEANING. (Is. 2:12; Amos 5:18-20)**
- B. A PROCESS of PURIFYING. (1:13-20; 2:12-17)**
- C. The COMING of RENEWAL. (2:18-27)**

The day of the Lord is a profound Biblical concept in both the Old and New Testaments. It had a deep resonance in Jewish thinking. It also was a constant experience that pointed to a final "day of the Lord."

3. Can you think of an idea in our culture that would have the same sense as "Day of the Lord" would have had for the Jewish people?
4. How does the message of Joel help us to have a realistic understanding of what life will be like in our world?

III. Starting a RIPPLE of RENEWAL. (2:28-3:21)

- A. FLOWING through HUMANITY. (2:28-32)**
- B. A FINAL end for EVIL. (3:1-16)**
- C. Taking REFUGE in GOD alone. (3:16)**

The "days" of the Lord leading up to the DAY of the Lord started a ripple of renewal that would flow through God's people leading up to the day of the final destruction of

all evil from creation. The ride will be bumpy, but our refuge is God who will protect us through the whole process.

5. What does it say about God that he uses people to do His renewing work? (2:28-29). What role might he be calling you to play in that?
6. When has God been a refuge for you? How did you come to see Him in that way?

IV. Living TOWARD the DAY. (3:14; I Thes. 5:1-3)

- A. Reframing RAGE as RESTORATION. (Ex. 34:6)**
- B. SURRENDER at the HEART level. (2:12-13; Mt. 15:7-9)**
- C. PARTICIPATING in JUSTICE for all creation. (2:28-32; Jer. 22:3; Mic. 6:8; Mt. 22:37-40)**

So how do we apply a plague of locusts to today? What does the Day of the Lord mean for you and me? It's a truth that we need to live into. Our lives can become examples of what the final Day of the Lord will bring about. It's a calling to work with God, surrendering our own agendas to His.

7. What's your reaction to the idea of God's wrath? Jeff says we need to reframe rage as restoration. Is that oversimplifying it? What do you think?
8. How does "rending our hearts" lead to living out the justice of God? How might that look in your life this week?