

A Warning Sounded

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[0 : 00] 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 everyone on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks. Neither shall one thrust another. They shall walk everyone 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.

[1 : 14] 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 is great and very terrible. And who can abide it?

Therefore also now, saith the Lord, 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 your God. For he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

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.

[2 : 30] Blow the trumpet in Zion.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Spare thy people, O Lord. Give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them.

Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his truth.

Let us further sing to his praise from Psalm 130, page 173 of the Psalter.

So let's sing Psalms version. Psalm 130, page 173. Lord, from the depths I call to you, Lord, hear me from on high, and give attention to my voice.

[3 : 55] When I for mercy cry, Lord, in your presence who can stand if your sins record? But yet forgiveness is with you, that we may fear you, Lord.

I wait, my soul waits for the Lord. My hope is in his word. More than the watchman waits for dawn, my soul waits for the Lord.

O Israel, put your hope in God, for mercy is with him, and full redemption. From their sins, his people, he'll redeem.

Let us sing the whole Psalm, Psalm 130, page 173. Lord, from the depths I call to you.

Lord, from the depths I call to you. Lord, hear me from on high, And give attention to my heart, when the eye for mercy cry.

[5 : 27] Lord, in your presence who can stand, in who our sins record.

Lord, have given forgiveness is with you, that we may fear you, Lord.

I win, my soul waits for the Lord. My hope is in his word.

Lord, my soul waits for the Lord.

Lord, my soul waits for the Lord. For his love, dear Holy God, For mercy is with him, And full redemption from their sins, his people give readings.

[7 : 06] Let us now turn to the passage that we read, The book of Joel, in chapter 2. And we may read at verse 1.

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion. Sound an alarm 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.

Although this little book was written many years ago, Its message is as relevant today as it was then.

It was written by the man whose name it bears joy. His name means the Lord is God.

We don't have any real biographical detail about this prophet. The first chapter speaks of a terrible plague of locusts.

[8 : 19] It was literally a dark day as these insects swarmed over the land. In the first chapter you find the prophet saying, Has anything like this happened in your days?

Or even in the days of your fathers? And then he instructs them, Tell your children about it. Let your children tell their children and their children, Another generation, What the chewing locusts left, The swarming locusts has eaten.

What the swarming locusts left, The crawling locusts has eaten. And what the crawling locusts left, The consuming locusts has eaten.

And the picture that is painted for us by the prophet Is one of total devastation, Effected by this plague of locusts.

And so you have these commands issued by the prophet In the first chapter, Awake, lament, gird yourselves, And consecrate yourselves.

[9 : 27] And all of these commands are designed To stimulate the question, Where are we placing our confidence?

Or in whom are we placing our confidence? And it is amazing to think How God brought the land to its knees Through the usage Or the instrumentality Of a little insect.

On its own, You wouldn't think much of it. You would crush it under your foot. But here is a swarm Of these insects And they cause Huge destruction and devastation To all the growth In the country.

Bringing it to its knees. Well, in this chapter, The prophet sounds A warning about divine judgment. And I'd like just three thoughts before you.

First of all, A warning sounded. Secondly, A call to return. And thirdly, Encouragement to return.

[10 : 44] First of all, A warning sounded. The first picture that is given to us Is of a trumpet Is of a trumpet Being blown. This was the mechanism That was used When danger threatened Or when the population Were being called To defend their country Or go to war.

When you go to war In your land Against the enemy Who oppresses you Then you shall sound An alarm with the trumpets And you will be Remembered before the Lord Your God And you will be saved From your enemies.

That's in the book of Numbers. When the sound of the trumpet Is blown in this way People knew That there was Imminent danger.

It was not blown To entertain But to warn An alarm call. And what is significant In my view In this passage Is where The trumpet Was to be blown.

The prophet writes Blow The trumpet In Zion. That's the very Place of which The psalmist Tells us God has made choice For the Lord Has chosen Zion.

[12 : 08] He has desired it For his dwelling place. This is my resting place Forever. Here I will dwell For I have desired it. That is the place That God set apart For his temple To be built And where worship Was to be offered.

The very place To which Promises are made By God I will abundantly Bless her provision I will satisfy Her poor With bread I will also Clothe her priests With salvation And her saints Shall shout Aloud For joy.

You know Many might say The capital Of the northern Kingdom Samaria Might require A trumpet Note of warning But surely Not in Jerusalem Not God's city Yes Samaria Might fall To the enemy But surely Not Zion Surely God Will protect His city And what Joel Is stating Is that The trumpet Warning Must be sounded In Zion Itself Why is there Such a fuss Made About this Note of warning Did God Not defend His city Before now Will he not Do it again But what Joel Is stating This time Is different Very very Different It is God Himself Who is coming In judgment Against his own City He is the one

Who threatens The security Of the city And to further Emphasize this The prophet States Sound an alarm In my holy Mountain Let all the Inhabitants Of the land Tremble Why And the response That you get Is this For the day Of the Lord Is coming It is at hand That is the reason To tremble The prophet Wishes them To look Above and beyond Recent events Of a Of an agricultural Disaster When all the Vegetation Was destroyed By the swarm Of locusts They are not To view it Merely As an act Of nature But as an act Of divine Judgment Yes That took place Through the Instrumentality Of the locust Swarming And intriguingly That is a phenomenon

That even now In the 21st century That scientists Are seeking An explanation As to why These Insects Why do they Swarmer What causes Them to multiply In such numbers That they can Blacken out The sky That they can Make the place Seem as if it Was thick Darkness And you see The prophet Is now He is He is no longer Speaking about Something that has Happened in the past But of something That is going to Happen You know The wisdom of man Might say As As the wisdom Of man Frequently Says The plague Of locust Was devastating It caused Great hardship And suffering But it will Pass You know Things can only Get better

[15 : 54] That's That's How men Reason Often Things will Be better Tomorrow Another day A brighter Future However That's not How Joel Views the Matter In fact Quite the Opposite What he is Saying in Effect is If you Thought things Were bad Then When the Plague of Locusts Took place Wait until You see What is Going to Happen It will Be much Much Worse Because As he Says himself In Verse 2 A day of Darkness And gloominess A day of Clouds And thick Darkness As the Morning Spread Upon the Mountains A great People And a Strong There Has Not Been Ever The Like Neither Shall Be Any More After It Even To The Years Of Many Generations Some Think That Joel Is Predicting An Incursion By The Syrian

Forces Or Even A Babylonian Army But In My View Joel Is Sounding Al Alarm That The Plague Of Locusts Was But The Forerunner Of Something Much Worse To Come And I Am Basing My View On The Information Given In The First Chapter Because There The Prophet Asks The Question Hear This You Elders Give Ear All You Inhabitants Of The Land Has Anything Like This Happened In Your Days Or Even In The Days Of Your Fathers And Then In This Chapter He States Let All The Inhabitants Of The Land Tremble For The Day Of The Lord Is Coming For It Is At Hand The Day Of The Lord Is Coming In Other Words The First Event Has Happened And The Implication Is That The Day Of The Lord Will Be Much Worse The

Prophet Wishes People To Be Warned And To Make Ready Blow The Trumpet He Speaks Of It As The Day Of The Lord In Verse 11 Of The Same Chapter That We Read For The Day Of The Lord Is Great And Very Terrible And Who Can Abide It The Day Of The Lord Mentioned Twice You Know It Is The First Time In The Minor Prophets That The Day Of The Lord Is Mentioned It Is Not Mentioned Directly In The Prophecy Of Hosea But You Do Find Mention Of The Day Of The Lord In Other Prophets In The Bible For Example In The Prophecy Of Isaiah Chapter 13 And Verse Six Wait For The Day Of The Lord Is At Hand It Will Come As Destruction From

The Almighty Now We Do Not Really Know When The Day When God Is Going To Break In In The Events Of The World But Whenever It May Take Place The Prophet Is Under No Illusion As To The Power That Belongs To God To Fulfill His Promise It Will Come As Destruction From The Almighty There Can Be No Doubt As To Whom The Victory Belongs Puny Arrogant Man It Is Like A Mere Grasshopper In The Presence Of In The Majestic Presence Of The Omnipotent God In The Prophecy Of Zephaniah Chapter 1 And Verses 14 To 17 The Great Day Of The Lord Is Near It Is Near And Hastens Quickly The Noise Of The Day Of The Lord Is Bitter There The Mighty Men Shall Cry Out That Day Is

A Day Of Wrath A Day Of Trouble And Distress A Day Of Devastation And Desolation A Day Of Darkness And Gloominess A Day Of Clouds And Thick Darkness A Day Of Trumpet And Alarm Against The Fortified Cities And Against The High Towers I Will Bring Distress Upon Men And They Shall Walk Like Blind Men Because They Have Sinned Against The Lord Their Blood Shall Be Pour Out Like Dust And Their Flesh Like Refuse Why Will This Take Place Is It Not Because Of The Destructive Poisonous Effect Of The Power Of Sin Because They Have Sinned Against The Lord Says The Prophet Seven I Now However You Understand The Day Of The Lord As Something Immediate In The Times Of The Prophets Or As

[20 : 56] Referring To Something More Far Off As The Last Day Because Sometimes You Find This In The Scriptures Where The Day Of The Lord May Appear Near And Where It Is Projected In The Distance And If You Ask The Prophets Sometimes They Spoke More Than They Knew But It Is Obvious That It Is Connected With The Disobedience Of Man And It Is Clear That It Is Going To Be A Day Of Judgment It Is Also Very Clear That This Day Is Going To Come And When It Does Come It Will Cause Huge Distress In The Lives Of Many One Thing That Is Not Clear Is When This Day Will Be Peter In His Second Letter The New Testament He Refers

To The Day Of The Lord And He Writes But The Day Of The Lord Will Come Says Peter In Other Words Don't Be In Any Doubt About It And He Tells You How It Will Come It Will Come He Says As A Thief In The Night In Which The Heavens Will Pass Away With A Great Noise And The Elements Will Melt With Fervent Heat Both The Earth And The Works That Are In It Will Be Burned Up Therefore Since All These Things Will Be Dissolved What Manor Of Persons Might You Be Ought You To Be In In Holy Conduct And God Looking For And Hastening The Coming Of The Day Of God Because Of Which The Heavens Will Be Dissolved Being On Fire And The Elements Will Melt With Fervent Heat The Day Of The Lord Will Come No One Should Be In Any Doubt What So About The Fulfillment

Of God's Promise Faithful Is He Who Has Promised Yes There Were Many Scoffers In The Days Of Noah When The Lord Instructed Noah To Build An Ark He Built It Far Away From Sea Many People Mocked Many People Ridiculed Noah He Took All These Years And Construct In The Ark And Many People Ridiculed What This Man Was Doing And When He Was Building The Ark He Was Preaching To Them About How God Was Going To Destroy The Old World Oh He Had Lost His Marbles He Didn't Know What He Was Doing Can You Believe It Here Is This Man Constructing This Huge Edifice On Dry Land And

Too Late They Realized The Truth Of The Message That Noah Spoke There Were Many Scoffers In The Day Of Peter They Pointed To Creation Creation Has Remained As It Was The Hills Are The Same The Mountains Are The Same Can You Expect That What Is So Stable And So Unalterable Is Going To Be Dissolved And Peter Reminds Them It Will Come As A Thief In The Night There Are Many Scoffers Today Who Are Of The Same Mind As Those In The Days Of Noah And In The Days Of Peter Let Me This

Time A Sea Of Fine Flour Shall Be Sold For A Shekel And Two Sears Of Barley For A Shekel At The Gate Of Samaria Seemed An Impossibility The City Was Totally Surrounded By The Syrian Army There Was No Possibility Of An Convoy Of Any Kind Getting An Entrance Into The City And An Officer An Official In The Court He He Ridiculed What Elisha Had Said And He Said Look He Said Even If God Made Windows In Heaven Could This Thing Be And He Was Just Poking Fun He Was He Was Mocking The The Prophecy Of The Man Of God And Elisha Said To You Shall

[26 : 19] See It He Said With Your Eyes But You Shall Not Eat Of It And When You Read That Account In The Second Book Of Kings In Chapter Seven You Read In Verse Sixteen Of That Chapter How What The Man Of God Said Took Place At The Very Time That He Said It Would Take Place And It Came About By The Most Unlikely Means Here Was This Powerful Army And God Played On Their Imagination And They Persuaded Themselves That They Heard Another Army Coming In Pursuit Of Them And They Fled They Left They Left Everything Behind All The Supplies Their Horses The

Road Was Littered With Baggage They Left It All Behind And To Compound What Took Place The Untouchables In The Community Of Samaria Were The First Beneficiaries Of All That Food That Was Left Behind Four Lepers And They Went From End To End Of The Camp Of The Syrian Army They Were Hungry They Hadn't Eaten For Days And When They Had Their Fill They Began To Think Of Those In The City And It Was First Fear That Made Them Think Of Those In The City But Then And This Is The Significant Part Of The

Story They Came To The They Said To One Another We Do Not Well This Day Is A Day Of Good Tidings Or A Day Of Good News And We Hold Our Peace What A Lesson For Every Person Who Has Been Brought Into Union By Faith With Christ A Day Of Good News And You Hold Your Peace How Can You Hold Your Peace When You Are The Recipient Of Good News And The Beneficiary Of Good News These Untouchables Went To The City And They Told Their Story It Wasn't Believed Of Course By The King He Sent Out Search Party Because He Didn't Believe What The Man Of God Had Predicted But So We Read

In Verse 16 Of That Chapter So A Measure Of Fine Flour Was Sold For A Shekel And Two Measures Of Barley For A Shekel According To The Word Of The Lord According To The Word Of The Lord See Where The Emphasis Is Placed On The Fulfillment Of God's Word Not Only That But The Man Who Mocked Elisha He Saw The Provision But You Know What Happened To Him The People Trod On Him In The Gate And The Stampede For Foot He Died As The Man Of God Had Said Again Fulfillment Of The Word Of God And So You See Anybody Who Doubts The Fulfillment Of The

Word Of God Is Really Trifling With Danger I Come Back To This Joel Says Sound The Trumpet In Zion In Zion And You Can Almost Hear People Say It's Foolish To Even Think That Anything Will Happen In Zion God But Do You Remember What Peter Writes In His First Letter In The New Testament For The Time Has Come For Judgment To Begin Where At The House Of God God See Zion Is Equated With Where God's Temple Is With The House Of God And Peter Says The

[31 : 19] Time Has Come For Judgment To Begin At The House Of God And He Goes On To Pose The Question That It Begins With Us First What Shall Be The End Of Those Who Do Not Obey The Gospel Of God In Other Words What Shall Be The End Of Those Who Do Not Believe The Gospel Of God That's Surely A Very Sobering Solemn Question And Then He Goes On To Say If The Righteous Is Scarcely Saved Where Will The Un Godly And The Sinner Appear You Know When I Was A Young Christian I Used To Hear The Older Men In Public Prayer Often Use The Phrase In Public Prayer The Dark And Cloudy Days That Have Come Upon Us In Gaelic I

Don't Hear Hear Hear It So Much Today In Public Prayer That Phrase And I Think That Says Much About The Present Generation If The Generation That Went Before Us Looked Upon Their Day As A Dark Day As A Dismal Day What Would They Say About Our Day There There Were A Generation Who Saw Much Blessing Who Saw Revival Who Saw Quickening In Communities That We Can Only Dream About What Would They Say If They Were To Come Here Today So It Begs The Question Why We Don't Hear It So Much Today And There Was Something Else I Used

To Hear In Those Days And That Was Sermons That Spoke Of Hell The Place Of The Last Of Of The Punishment On The Last Of Fire And Brimstone And I Used To Hear Sinners Being Earnestly Reminded Of The dangers Of A Lost Eternity And Again I Do Not Hear That As Much As I Used To We Become So So Sophisticated That We Don't Need To Hear These Things Anymore Now I Am Not Finding Fault With Anyone For This Because I Fear I Am Just As Guilty As The Next Person Of Suppressing These Teachings From The Bible Or At Least Not Raising Them As Often As I I Do I Do Not Believe That Such Emphasis In And Of It Will Bring Anyone To Newness Of Life Or Bring A Person To Seek The Lord But What I Do Know Is This Our Lord Spoke Often Of These Matters

He Didn't Shirk From Proclaiming Them That They Would Be Unpopular And That They Wouldn't Appeal To The Audiences Whom He Addressed And If He Saw Reason To Do It We Should Do The Same And It Reminds Me Of An Old Elder Who I Knew When I Was Young He Belonged To Another Area Of The Island And On Our Sunday Evening Of Communion Services When The One Of The Visiting Ministers Came To The To The Place Where The Service Was To Be Held He He Said To The Elder And He Was Just Testing Him What Should I Give To Them Tonight And Immediately The Old Elder Responded And I Heard Him Say It He Had A Bit Of A Stummer He Was Known As Big Sunday Give Them Hellfire

And Brimstone Now I Don't Know Was He Of The Mind That That Was The Only Message That The Hearers In That Meeting House Required But I Do That When That Man Was Engaged In Public Prayers That He Used To Pray Earnestly For The For The Salvation Of Sinners In General And Then He Would Plead Often With Tears Fervently Particularly For Those Of The Village In Which He Himself Dwelt Wasn't That He That He Hated His Fellow Villagers That He Wanted Them To Hear A Sermon With Fire And Brimstone But He Desired The Salvation Of Their Soul And So

[36 : 21] Joel States This Is Where The Trumpet Is To Be Sounded Blow The Trumpet In Zion And What I Understand From That Is Blow It In The Church Now To Those Of A Musical Band The Trumpet Been Played Can Can Be A Very Pleasant Sound Very Musical And Entertaining But The Sounding Of The Trumpet Is Not Done To Entertain Or To Evoke And Stimulate Appreciation Of Music This Trumpet Is To Be Blown As A Warning Sound And How Do We Take That Forward Into The Life Of The Church Today Is It Not By Placing The Truth That Speak To Us Of Our Need Of Salvation Before Our Minds And Hearts The Prophet Amos In Chapter Six Of His Prophecy Says Woe To You Who Are At Ease

In Zion He Is Pronouncing Woe On Those Who Thought They Were Safe Enough In Zion And And From One Point Of View Why Shouldn't They Be Walk About Zion Says The Psalmist And Go Round The High Towers Thereof Tell Consider Your Palaces Mark Her Bulwarks Well Look At The Strong Walls That Are Surrounding Jerusalem Impenetrable Walls Ah But Friend It's Not Enough To Have Strong Impenetrable Walls If Our Trust Is Not In The Lord Jesus Christ It Will Not Protect Us It Will Not Provide Us A Haven Of Any Kind Only In Christ Are We Afforded Eternal Security Matthew Hendry Makes The Shrewd Observation That

It Is Difficult To Be Great Without Being Proud It's Not Enough To Have The Privileges Of The Church If Our Confidence Is Not In Christ You Know Sin Is So Deceptive If I Can Use An Illustration It Operates Like Strong Drink In The Life Of Someone With A Drink Addiction You Know Perhaps You Have Heard A Person Under The Influence Of Drink Or Drugs Described Like This If You Could Only See Yourself As Others See You You Know Here Is The Man Or The Woman Under The Influence Of Drink Or Drugs Who Is Like Us And Their Imagination Knows No Bounds When They Are Under The Influence Of That Power And You Will Hear

Somebody Say If You Could Only See Yourself As Other People See You How Foolish You Are In The Way That You Are Behaving And Just Think Friends If Only We Could See Ourselves As God Sees Us With All Our Sin Exposed To The Scrutiny Of His Holiness And The Prophet Is Seeking To Make People Aware Of The Awfulness Of Divine Judgment He Is Seeking To Bring Home At The Same Time To Them The Danger Of Their Low Spiritual State And To Emphasize This He Brings Up These Very Last Plagues Which The Egyptians Experienced The Eighth Plague That Of The Locust The Ninth Plague That Of The Death Of The First Born Where They Were Not

Under The Protection Of The Blood Of The Passover Lamb Events That Possibly Caused The Israelites Then To Rejoice And To Raise Expectation Of Deliverance In Their Minds And Hearts As They Saw The Egyptians Suffer And Ultimately They Themselves Were Delivered By The Power And The Might Of A Faithful Covenant Keeping God And They Sang On The Far Shores Of The Red Sea I Will Sing To The Lord For He Has Triumphed Gloriously And It's As If Joel Is Now Saying To The Current Nation Do You Now See This Happening To Yourselves For The Day Of The Lord Is Great And Terrible Who Can Endure It The Day Of The Lord Is Great And Terrible Who Can Abide Or Who Also Speaks Of The Day Of His Coming Who Can Endure The Day Of His Coming Who Can Stand

[41 : 22] When He Appears For He Is Like A Refiner's Fire And Like A Launderer's Soap And You See Everything That Joel Is Proclaiming Here Is Designed To Bring His Immediate Hearers And Us To The Place Where We Rend Our Hearts Now It Is Possible That Many Were Saying In Joel's Day And You May Be Saying It Tonight What A Sermon All Doom And Gloom Who Wants To Listen To That That's Not The Kind Of Sermon That We Want To Hear Oh Very True But Think About It Like This It May Be The Sermon That We Need To Hear It The Inclination Is Let's Move On And Joel As A Faithful Servant Wishes Us To Be Like Those On The Day Of Pentecost What Was True On The Day Of Pentecost They

Were Cut To The Heart And That That That Brings Me To My Second Point The Warning Sound Secondly A Call To Return Now Therefore Says The Lord Find That In Verse Twelve Turn Even To Me With All Your Heart With Fasting With Weeping And With Mourning We Are To Rend And Rend Your Heart And Not Your Garments Now Therefore As If Joel Were Saying There Is Still Time Still There Is An Opportunity To Turn To The Lord With All Your Heart He Doesn't Say Make Readjustments To Your Life He Doesn't Say You Must Reform Your Way Of Life

He Doesn't Say If You Cease Doing This Or That Or If You Do This Or The Next Thing No That Is Not What He Says But Implied In This Command To Turn Is This That It Is Impossible For You And I To Repair Our Own Broken Fragmented Lives That's What Sin Does It Breaks Us It Fragments Our Lives And It's Impossible For Us To Put Them Together Impossible For Us To Put Them Together Remember The Old Nursery Rime All The King's Horses And All The King's Men Couldn't Put Humpty Together Again How Much More So When You Come To Try And Repair A Fragmented Sinful Life You You Cannot Put It Together

But God Can God Can That's The Good News We Must Come To God How Often Do We Deceive Ourselves Into Thinking I Can Reform My Life I Can Turn It Around And The Biblical Reality Is We Cannot We Fail Miserably The One Who Alone Is In Possession Of The Power To Repair Fragmented Lives Says To You And Me Turn To Me Turn To Me Says God We Don't Have The Skill Or The Power Live Your Lives In His Capable Hands He Is Calling To Repentance And That Begs The Question What Is Repentance Remember How The Reformers Answered The Question In The Shorter Catechism Repentance Unto Life Is A Saving Grace Whereby A Sinner Have A True Sense Of His Sin And Mercy Of God In Christ Doth With Grief And Hatred Of

Sin Turn From It Unto God With Full Purpose Of And Endeavor After New Obedience In Those Days It Was Customary For People Who Were Grieving Either Because Of The Loss Of Loved Ones Or Because Of Some Terrible Affliction To Wear Sackcloth And As As A Mark Of Mourning It's Also A Mark Of Repentance An Outward Mark Of Mourning For Sin And That Brings Me Back To The Incident I Spoke Of Earlier Of The Siege Of The City Of Samaria Because The King Of The Northern Kingdom Was Jehoram And When The Syrian Army Surrounded The City The City As I Said Already Was Cut Off Food Was Almost Non-existent The Rich Who Had

[46 : 22] A Little Money Were Eating The Food Of The Poor And The Poor Were Eating One Another There Was A Great Famine So The King As A Ruler Had No Solution To The Problem But We Are Told He Towed His Clothes And As He Passed By On The Wall The People Looked Underneath He Wore The Garments Of Mourning But It Is Very Clear From What We Are Told That This Mourning Wasn't Form Only It Was Outward But Not Inward It Was A Shallow Attempt To Display Mourning But It Was Nothing More Than A Sham How Do We Know There Is A Waiting On God Listen To What The Psalmist Says In One Of The Great Penitential Psalms Of The Bible I Wait For The Lord My Soul Waits And

In His Word I Do Hope My Soul Waits For The Lord More Than Those Who Watch For The Morning Yes More Than Those Who Watch For The Morning And There Is Absolutely No Indication Of This Kind Of Waiting In The Life Of The King Quite The Contrary He Is Characterized By A Spirit Of Impatience He Was Bent On Murder And That Demonstrates If We Needed It The Type Of Relationship He Had With God He Was Angry He Wished To Vent His Anger In Putting God Servant Elisha To Death And God Do So To Me And More Also The Head Of Elisha The Son Of Shaphat Remain On His Body And So You See In This Passage This Evening Joel Places Huge Emphasis On The Need For Repentance But Not As An Outward Superficial Repentance But As True Inner Repentance Rend Your Heart And Not Your

Garment That Involves Specific Detailed Confession Of Sin It Involves True Mourning Over Sin And You Remember How Paul Writes In His Letter To The Corinthians For Godly Sorrow Produces Repentance Leading To Salvation Not To Be Regretted But The Sorrow Of The World Produces Death So You See The Person Who Truly Repents Comes To God And Has Their Sin Put In The Holy Spotlight Of Perfect Truth Search Me O God And Know My Heart Try Me And Know My Thoughts And When You Are Subjected To The Searching Scrutiny Of Almighty God Of A Holy

God Then You Can Only Say Against Godly Sorrow Understands And Recognizes The Need For Divine Forgiveness And Pardon The Need For Restored Fellowship With God And The Psalmist Reminds Us Of The Characteristics Of Godly Sorrow A Broken Heart A Broken And A Contrite Heart These O God You Will Not Despise Now The Question Was Once Asked In A Sunday School What Is Repentance One Little Boy Put Up His Hand And When The Teacher Asked Him For An Answer He Said It Has Been Sorry For Your Sins Little Girl Who Was Also In The Group Had Her Hand

Up And She Said It Is Been Sorry Enough To Quit Your Sin And On That Occasion The Little Girl Had Obviously Grasped More Of The True Nature Of Repentance Than The Little Boy People Ask The Question Is My Sorrow Deep Enough And That Begs The Question Deep Enough For What What's The Point Of Sorrow For Sin Is To Lead A Man Or A Woman Or A Boy Or Girl To Repentance And To Faith And If You Have As Much Sorrow As Leads You To Penitence And Trust You Have Enough Because You Know It's Not Your Sorrow That's Going To Wash Away Your Sin It Is Christ's Blood In other Words It Is The Atoning Work Of Christ So Don't Be Troubled About

[51 : 24] The Question Have I Sorrow Enough The Question Is This Has Has Your Sorrow And Mine Led Us To Cast Ourselves On Christ Alone That's The Question Have We Come There And When We Have Then We Will Know The Sweetness Of Pardon Repentance Not Something That's Done Just Once It's A Constant Factor In The Lives Of Believers Until You Draw The Last Breath In This World And Then The Bible Says Sorrow And Sigh Shall Flee Away A Call To Return A Warning Sound As The Time Has Gone The Encouragement To Return Where Do We Find The Encouragement

To Return Verse 13 For He Is Gracious And Merciful Slow To Anger And Of Great Kindness As If Joel Were Saying Rather Than Finding Reasons To Be Angry Or Wrathful With Them He Finds Reasons To Be Merciful That's The Kind Of God Who Is Set Before Us In His Trust Where We Are Reminded Of The Generosity And The Liberality Of Divine Mercy Surely That Is One Way In Which We Experience The Grace Of God To Us In The Gospel He Is The God Of Plenteous Redemption The Extravagant Generous Provision Of Grace He Has Not Dealt With Us According

To Our Sins Nor Punished Us According To Our Iniquities Oh My Friend Do You Have This Confidence In This God To Pardon Psalmist Says He Doesn't Deal With Us According To Our Desert But He Deals With Us In The Generosity And The Liberality Of His Mercy In The Magnitude Of His Love And So He Calls Us All To Come And To Turn To Him And You Notice The Comprehensive Nature Of All Who Are Urged To Come To Him You Notice What He Says Gather The People Assemble The Elders Gather The Children Even Those That Suck Even The Infants Even The Babies Take

Them All They Are All Urged To Come The Bride And The Bride Let Them All Come And Let The Priests Who Minister To The Lord Weep Between The Porch And The Altar Oh Friends There Is Much Cause For Weeping And How Rarely We See It Today Under The Sound Of The Gospel We Are Encouraged To Build On The Rock Don't Be Tempted To Build On Wood Here Stubble Because That Foundation Will Be Swept Away There Is Only One True Foundation The Warning Sounded Blow The Trumpet In Zion The Call To Return Turn To Me Says The Living God And

The Encouragement To Return The Generosity And The Liberality Of Divine Mercy The God Who Does Not Deal With Us As We Deserve But According To His Infinite Riches In Grace In Christ Jesus Let Us Pray Oh Eternal God God