

Title: Many Happy Returns
Text: Joel 2:12-13
Topic: Repentance, Forgiveness
Teacher: Pastor Barry
Time: 1/22
File Under: Christian Living



The Israelites failed to keep God's commandments and **suffered** the consequences of their disobedience.

God's **prophets** called the people time and time again back to God.

The return to God is often through valleys, but on the other side is **blessing and happiness**.

The occasion for Joel's message was an invasion in the land by a horde of locusts. It was the **judgment of God** upon the people for they had forsaken His commandments.

Reading between the lines you see and feel the heartbeat of God – God **longing for the return** of His wayward children.

“The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His deeds to the people of Israel. The Lord is compassionate and

gracious slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will He harbor His anger forever. He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities, for as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. For He knows how we are formed, and He remembers that we are but dust.” Psalm 103:6-14

Digging Deeper: Joel 2:12-17 With destruction at hand what does Joel expect? What is meant by “*rend your heart not your garments*” (v13)? What is the point in the priest's prayer for Israel (v17)?

For Further Reflection: Can repentance of heart be true without “fasting and mourning”? How? What would a spiritual fast entail today? What would corporate repentance require for your church? For your nation?