



International Bible Lesson
Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series
L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Thinking Further

Reasons to Rend Your Heart

March 26, 2017

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

“Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity” (Joel 2:13).

Jesus and the Old Testament prophets warned against religious practices that some used simply to mislead others. The public tearing of one’s clothing was meant to demonstrate deep humility, sorrow, and remorse for having wronged someone, but for too many it was done just for show. A public confession may or may not reveal the true condition of someone’s heart. Too many people publicly express their regret for wrongdoing when their only real regret was getting caught; so, they quietly resolve to be more careful the next time. To “rend the heart” is a sincere willingness before God to make amends for doing wrong to the one wronged, if possible, to express sincere sorrow for the wrong done, and to do right in the future with God’s help. No one has been more wronged by us than God. And Joel has given us good reasons to rend our hearts and return to the LORD. God is gracious and compassionate. God is more willing to forgive us than we can imagine; therefore, God graciously sent His Son to show and tell us how much God is willing to forgive those who rend their hearts and return to Him through faith in Jesus. God so abounds in love and compassion that He is willing to take our painful regrets and the pain we have caused Him unto himself so He can heal our wounded spirits and enable us to do right in the future. Because God is slow to anger, He is waiting patiently for us to return to Him.

1. From your reading of Joel, how does God expect sinners to come to Him?
2. Why can sinners feel confident that God will save them when they come to Him?
3. Will God only meet people’s spiritual needs? Give a reason for your answer?
4. When did God fulfill His promise in Joel 2:28-29?
5. What do Joel 2:32 and Romans 10:13-17 teach about the way to be saved and the responsibility of Christians?

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