

Family Worship Guide – Week 32

READ

- The name Joel may be translated, “Yahweh is God.” God sent Joel to proclaim “the day of the LORD” or judgment on Israel and all nations. He offers a message of hope and reconciliation for those who truly repent and turn to God.
- Read Joel 2:1-11. Joel describes the judgment of God. The imagery may refer to an army of locusts or to the Babylonian army. Regardless of whom it refers to, the point is that the judgment will be great and unbearable.
- Read Joel 2:12-17. What does God call the people to do to avoid judgment and destruction?
- Read Joel 2:18-27. After calling for repentance, Joel describes how God will have pity when they repent.
- Read Joel 2:28-32. Read Jeremiah 31:31-33. God will secure restoration with His children by sending His Spirit to change the hearts of all His children. Judgment will come upon all the earth, but some will be saved. Who shall be saved?
- Read Acts 2:14-24, 37-38. On the day of Pentecost, God fills the apostles with the Holy Spirit. Peter then proclaims the gospel to all who are gathered in Jerusalem, and he quotes Joel 2:28-32. In verse 37, we see that the crowd was “cut to the heart.” Jeremiah 31 and Joel 2 are beginning to be fulfilled as God’s Spirit changes the hearts and minds of His children. Later in Acts, we see that God also pours out His Spirit on Gentiles. The prophecies in Joel and Jeremiah have already begun to be fulfilled!

The Bottom Line: Repentance precedes mercy and forgiveness.

Questions:

How does a person return to God with all his or her heart?

How does a church return to God with all their heart?

Why does God require fasting, weeping and mourning?

Why does God want them to “rend” (tear) their hearts and not their garments? What does that mean?

God is “gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.” Is this statement true? Give examples of how we have already seen God display these characteristics this year in our daily Bible reading.

Is God seeking the repentance of individuals only? What does Joel call the whole congregation to do together?

How will God restore His people?

Why will God restore His people? See verse 27.

PRAY

- Read *Window On The World*, pg. 120-121 *Mongolia*
- Use Prayer Card

SING

- Use lyric sheet and mp3 download of “Not What My Hands”
- Not What My Hands is actually an older hymn text that has been set to a modern melody with an additional chorus added.

The original text speaks to our inability to redeem ourselves through our own works. It also affirms that peace and true contentment cannot be found within ourselves. It is only through Christ’s work on the cross and His great grace that we are righteous before God and truly satisfied.

The new chorus written by Aaron Keyes is a response to this revelation of truth. You see, it is only when we realize our deep need for Christ and our own inadequacies, that we will raise our hands and offer our lives to Him in surrender.

It is our hope that this song will shine a light on our insufficiency before a holy God and the need we all have to repent and surrender completely to Him.

MEMORIZE

- Joel 2:32a: And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created to help parents better communicate the Biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These activities and questions can replace or serve as a supplement to the questions under the 'Read' section on Page 1. Remember, these suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's Word and worship Him together.

Preschool (Birth-Kindergarten)

- Before you begin, you will need to locate a candle and a lighter. Light the candle and explain to your child that the flame is fire. Ask them if they can think of some ways that fire is helpful to us? (Ex: fire provides heat to keep us warm, and lights the darkness to help us see) Ask if we touch the flame. No! Fire is very hot. If I put a piece of paper in this flame it would burn, right? But, we need fire to help keep us warm and give us light.
- Explain that God is like this fire. He is Holy and different from everything else. God also hates sin and punishes sin. He punishes those He loves to cause us to be sorry and come back to Him. We need God, and He wants to be that source of light for all of us. He is good for us, just like the flame of this candle can be a source of light and good for us.
- Remember that sin problem that we have talked about? Man is sinful and cannot save himself. When we make bad choices/sin, it can separate us from God. (Blow out the candle) No more light right? When we sin, God wants us to tell the truth and be sorry for the bad choice that we made, to turn away from our sin, and ask Him to forgive us. We need God to save us and be that light or fire for us. When we do this, God will forgive us, and be that light again for us. (light candle again) Do you see how God and sin do not go together? We need God to save us!

Children (Grades 1-5)

- Ask the children the following questions. If the statement is true they should stand, if it is false they should remain seated.
 - God spoke to his people through the prophets. (True)
 - Joel described God's judgment as being no big deal. (False)
 - God would never forgive his people for disobeying. (False)
 - God's love is bigger and stronger than our sin. (True)
- Ask the children what they would do if they were told that a terrible storm was headed toward their home. (They would prepare. Get to a safe place.) That is similar to what Joel was doing when he told the people that one day God will judge all the people on earth. Joel tells us that the judgment will be awful. So what should we do? God wants us to prepare and get to a safe place. That means we repent and call on the name of the LORD (have faith in Christ alone), and we will be saved!
- "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." Joel 2:12
- In this verse God is telling us something very important. He is asking us to stop sinning, turn to God, and change the way we live. Ask the children about the difference between "being sorry" and "repenting". Repenting includes stopping what you are doing wrong, turning away from those wrong behaviors, and turning to God. The Bible tells us that judgment is coming, but we don't know when. God wants us to give our whole heart to Him now. Pray and thank God for the mercy and forgiveness available to us through Jesus.
- And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. Joel 2:32a
- Object Lesson
Supplies: Bowl of water (represents the heart), Pepper (represents sin), Dish Soap (represents Jesus)
Place a bowl of water where everyone can see it. Sprinkle pepper onto the water and explain that the pepper represents the sin that fills our hearts. When we repent of our sin and turn and place all our faith in Jesus, God is faithful to forgive us and cleanse our hearts of sin. Put a drop of dish soap in the center of the bowl. The pepper will immediately move to the sides of the bowl. Just like the dish soap moved the pepper to the sides of the bowl, when we repent Jesus moves our sin aside so our hearts can be filled with Him.

Students (Grades 6-12)

- How would you define the word "repent?"
- According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, repent means "to turn from sin and dedicate oneself to the amendment of one's life," "to feel regret or contrition" or "to change one's mind." How does repentance differ from simply apologizing for a wrong action? (Biblical repentance is demonstrated in action as we turn from sin and trust in Christ to change our hearts and minds.)
- How might true repentance affect the lifestyle of a Christ follower?
- Based on the passages you have read from Joel, what is the result of true repentance?

Prayer

Week 32

Intercession

Intercession means praying for others' spiritual and physical needs. God tells us in His Word to pray for others. If you desire to read some passages from Scripture about this, some are listed below.

Biblical Basis for Intercession:

1 Corinthians 10:3-5; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 6:18-21; 1 Timothy 2:1-8

Take an opportunity for those gathered with you in worship to mention specific prayer needs of others. Pray for each one of these requests specifically.

Nations: Mongolia

- The economic situation in Mongolia has been poor for years. Pray for God to show Himself mighty during this time of need.
- All three people groups in Mongolia are considered unreached. Pray for the work of the Gospel among these people groups.
- Buddhism has been on the rebound since the fall of Communism. Pray for believers in Mongolia to stand strong and share their faith.
- The Mongolian Church is in need of strong native leadership. Ask the Lord to raise up members of His body in the Word and faith.

Source: *Operation World* by Johnstone and Mandryk

Scripture Memory

Week 32

Joel 2:32a And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Not What My Hands

Lyrics by Horatius Bonar
Additional lyrics and arrangement
by Aaron Keyes

Not what my hands have done

Can save my guilty soul

Not what my toiling flesh has borne

Can make my spirit whole

Not what I feel or do

Can give me peace with God

Not all my prayers and sighs and tears

Can bear my awful load

These guilty hands are raised

Filthy rags are all I bring

And I have come to hide

Beneath your wings

These holy hands are raised

Washed in the fountain of your grace

And now I wear your righteousness

Thy work alone O Christ

Can ease this weight of sin

Thy blood alone O Lamb of God

Can give me peace within

Thy love to me O God

Not mine O Lord to Thee

Can rid me of this dark unrest

And set my spirit free

We are broken but we are Yours

Thy grace alone O God to me

Can pardon speak

Thy power alone O Lamb of God

Can this sore bondage break

No other work save Thine

No other blook will do

No strengty of that which is divine

Can bear me safely through

And now I wear Your righteousness

I praise the God of grace

I trust His truth and might

He calls me His I call Him mine

My God my joy my light

My Lord has saved my life

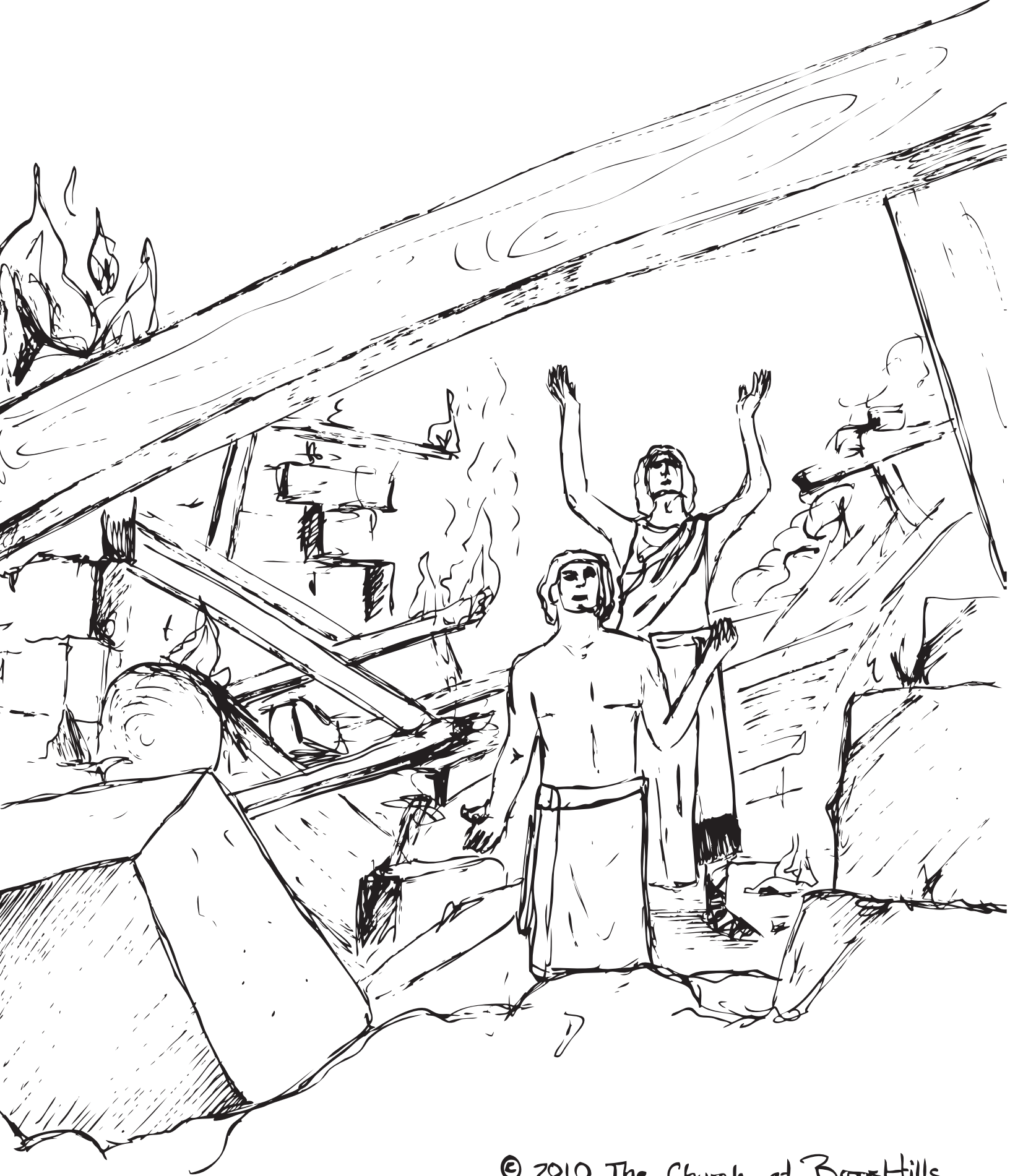
And freely pardon gives

I love because He first love me

I live because He lives

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