

“Restoration” (Joel 2:18-27)

1. Promise of Restoration (18-20)

a. Jealous or Zealous? (18)

- i. It is not that God is fickle thus only willing our good when we do right. So why “will be zealous”? It is likely distinguishing the punishment due to His jealousy of wanting His adulterous bride to be faithful and His blessings determined for her when she trusts in Him.
- ii. Lloyd Ogilvie offered: God is “zealous” or jealous for His land. The word is from the same root used to describe Yahweh as a “jealous God” in the explanation of the second commandment (Ex. 20:5; Deut. 5:9) and in God’s response to His people worshipping other Gods (Deut. 32:16, 21; Ps. 78:58; Ezek. 16:38, 42). Using the same construction “to be zealous/jealous for” something, other texts describe God as jealous or zealous for Jerusalem (Zech. 1:14), for Zion (Zech. 1:14; 8:2), and for His holy name (Ezek. 39:25). In those texts His zeal takes the form of protection of His people from their adversaries and restoring their peace and prosperity.¹

b. The Answered Prayer (19a) God hears (sees & knows) all, yet the prayer to which He will listen and answer is that of repentance.

c. Satisfied not Satiated (19b-c) God will provide our needs to satisfaction but does not enable us to gluttonous apathy. Are you satisfied in the Covenant LORD (CL)? Are you perpetually dissatisfied about anything? Are you able to move on from a disappointment, loss, violation, etc. or are you stuck with discontentment, anger, hopelessness, or greed?

d. Removal of Reproach (19d)

- i. We are to obey and do well not for our recognition or glory (2 Cor. 4:5-6) but for our Father’s praise (Mat. 5:16).
- ii. Some of us fear being a reproach to others and value approval too highly. We must be able to be ‘cancelled,’ discriminated, mocked, maligned, persecuted, and even killed for His sake.
- iii. Therefore, it is the reproach of our sin stigma that He removes. My cousin said that I went “from sinister to minister.” I was once a black sheep of the family and now sought out for family funerals. They would have laughed at such a prospect before my repentance.

e. Removal of Rancid Ransackers (20) God obviously doesn’t remove all threats, challenges, difficulties, or even tribulation (as He promises such). But He removes the real threats of our destruction for “what can man do to me?” We are to fear absolutely nothing in Christ! Read Ro. 8:36-39.

2. Praise for Restoration (21-23)

a. Marvelous vs Monstrous (21 cf. 20)

- i. Although the ransackers did ‘astounding’ things, the CL does “astounding’ things all the more. See Ps. 71:19; Jer. 33:3; Eph. 3:20.
- ii. Such an antithetical parallel is used in Ps. 35:26-27 “those who (literally) ‘say great things against’ God meet their match in the great God.”²

b. Progression of Restoration (22-23a)

- i. In v. 21 the land was told not to fear. In v. 22 the animals are told not to fear. And in v. 23, God’s people are instructed to rejoice.

¹ Ogilvie, L. J., & Ogilvie, L. J. (1990). *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah* (Vol. 22, p. 251). Thomas Nelson Inc.

² Allen, L. C. (1994). *Joel*. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 788). Inter-Varsity Press.

“Restoration” (Joel 2:18-27)

- ii. Zion is indicative of God’s mount, Temple, and people. Zion is a covenant term connoting the relationship of God with His people.
 - iii. In fact, covenant consequences in Deut. 11:13-15 are echoed here in v. 23. →
 - c. Righteous Rain/Reign (23b-e)
 - i. The term *moreh* has a root that may mean ‘to throw, to shoot or to teach’. Most often it refers to a ‘teacher’ (2 Kings 17:28; 2 Chron. 15:3; Job 36:22; Prov. 5:13; Isa. 9:15; 30:20; Hab. 2:18).³
 - ii. Another term translated rain is used of pouring rain גֶּשֶׁם (*gešem*) **rain, shower**⁴
 - iii. A Word Play: The term *morah* is only used once connoting rain (Ps. 84:6) but here it seems to be used like the references above and in particular to ‘teaching’ or disseminating/dispersing righteousness.
 - iv. O. Palmer Robertson wrote: Some support for this interpretation may be found in the rather distinctive connection in Scripture between right teaching and the blessing of rain. At the dedication of the temple, Solomon prays that the Lord will ‘*teach* them the good way in which they should walk; and *send rain* on your land’ (2 Chron. 6:27). The prophet Isaiah notes that the Lord promises that Israel will see and hear its *teachers*, ‘and he will give *rain* for your seed ...’ (Isa. 30:20–23). ¶ In an extensive treatment of this subject, G. W. Ahlström notes the close connection between the blessing of rain and the person of the Messianic king. This king is ‘like the rain’ coming down to bless the earth (Ps. 72:6). He also is the upholder of righteousness who comes down like the rain and causes the abundance of grain to grow in the fields (Ps. 72:1–3, 16). Ahlström concludes that the *moreh* of Joel 2:23 ‘may refer to a person, the one Yahweh will give to the people, in order that this person might show them the “right” cultic way causing rain to come and all its blessings with it’.¹⁸ ¶ The same connection between agricultural blessing and the teaching of righteousness from the Lord may be found in Hosea 10:12. The people are admonished to ‘sow righteousness,’ ‘reap the fruit of mercy’ and ‘seek the Lord until he comes and “teaches” (*yoreh*) righteousness to you’ (Hosea 10:12). The imagery, as well as the ambiguity, is the same as that which is found in Joel 2:23. Either ‘he’ will come and ‘rain down righteousness’ or ‘teach righteousness’. The language in Hosea will bear either meaning, but the phrase ‘until he comes’ may suggest the idea of a coming deliverer. The concept of righteousness ‘raining’ may seem strained, but it fits the string of admonitions in Hosea for the people to ‘sow righteousness,’ ‘reap the fruit of unfailing love’ and ‘break up’ the ‘unploughed ground’ of their souls. At the same time, the phrase could indicate that God’s appointed deliverer will bring blessing through the communication of truth.^{19 5 6}
3. Prosperity of Restoration (24-27)
 - a. Promise of Abundance (24) The land was tied to covenantal obedience. God was more than fair, He is gracious when we repent.

³ Robertson, O. P. (1995). *Prophet of the Coming Day of the Lord: The Message of Joel* (pp. 69–70). Evangelical Press.

⁴ Harris, R. L., Archer, G. L., Jr., & Waltke, B. K., eds. (1999). In *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 174). Moody Press.

¹⁸ Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, p. 108.

¹⁹ Cf. the discussion of Cecil Roth, ‘The Teacher of Righteousness and the Prophecy of Joel’ in *Vetus Testamentum* 13 (1963), pp. 91–5, and the related literature that he cites.

⁵ Robertson, O. P. (1995). *Prophet of the Coming Day of the Lord: The Message of Joel* (pp. 70–71). Evangelical Press.

⁶ This is further contextualized respective of the verse’s mention of covenant Zion as mentioned in the precious subpoint.

“Restoration” (Joel 2:18-27)

b. Prosperity from Poverty (25)

- i. We have earned penalty (Ro. 6:23) but God has provided grace and repair for the damage we have done.
- ii. We can and should lament for the harm we caused and more importantly, the offense to God our sins provoked. However, we are called to rejoice after repentance. For God restores not only to new but better than new.
- iii. Whatever you have incurred, whatever you have committed, whatever you have neglected, whatever infirmity, whatever you have lost, or have had stolen, or have been violated – Yes, the CL can restore and renew cf. 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Cor. 2:9.
- iv. Furthermore, we are told that Jesus presents us as pure virgins without blame or corruption (Eph. 5:25-27 cf. 2 Cor. 11:2. Only Jesus can do such.
- v. God’s Army: It is God who sits sovereign over the nations and nature and He employs such for our salvation. Oh how great and gracious Thou Art!
- vi. Such theological insight is a key to less stress because all things work for our good (Ro. 8:28).

c. Not Ashamed! (26-27)

- i. As mentioned, He removes our reproach of sin and thus we are not ashamed of Him. Ro. 10:11 cf. 1:16. This is not saying we will never experience guilt from our sin or shame from the opposing world. It is saying that when we trust the CL Jesus, we will never be ashamed to be His.
- ii. Nevertheless, we are to share the reproach and endure the world’s shaming and follow Him outside the camp where He bore the shame and paid our debt. See Heb. 12:2; 13:12-13.
- iii. The CL is ours “in [our] midst...I am the LORD your God” and we are His redeemed and purified Bride!

PC

Like much of Scripture’s prophesy, Joel’s included immediate relevance with a call to trust the Covenant LORD (CL) and in this case repent. This prophesy also conveyed the provisions of the faithful CL to make good on His ‘threats’ and perhaps be gracious in His promises. And also like many other prophetic writings, Joel’s prophesy pointed to ultimate fulfillment at and after the eschaton (end of days). In our focal passage Joel highlighted the promise of, praise for, and prosperity of redemption when the people of the CL return to Him. Either one will refuse to turn to God and be removed like a rancid odor for the astonishing things he has done; or one will turn to God and rejoice for his reproach will be removed by the astonishing thing the CL has done.