

## THE PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE: JOEL 2:18-27

Last week we covered THE CALL TO PRAYER AND REPENTANCE in Joel 1:1-14, 2:12-17.

God sent His prophet Joel to bring to the awareness of the people their present condition and the threatened judgment if they continued. He called them to repent by turning to Him with prayer, fasting a contrite heart, to stop the outward form of worship and begin worshiping Him with sincerity of hearts. If they did, He would bless them and their future generations.

Let us now look at the promises He made to them.

1. THE BLESSING OF PROSPERITY. Joel 2:18-19; The people heeded the words of the prophet and prayed. God heard them and answered them and showed mercy towards them. He promised that He would never again make such a reproach among the nations. He would send them grain, new wine and oil. They were able to receive the new wine because when they repented, they received the new wine skins. Jesus taught that you cannot put new wine into old wine skin because the old wine skin would not be able to contain the new wine. The new wine would tear the old wine skin and the new wine would be wasted. (Mark 2:22)

Too many times individuals pray for God's blessings when their hearts are not right. They want the blessings, and at the same time they have no intentions of repenting. God cannot violate His principles and grant them their desires because it would ruin them. Jesus said if you put new wine into old wine skin it will burst the old wine skin. We seek revival, but revival will only come when we repent and turn from our evil ways and turn to God.

2. THE BLESSING OF PROTECTION: Joel 2:20-22: In addition to prosperity God promised to remove their attackers. He would protect them; they should no longer be fearful of their enemies. They should begin rejoicing and start trusting Him for His provision and

protection. There would be green pastureland for their animals and the fruit trees would bring forth it's fruits again. It would be a time of joy and gladness in the land.

3. THE BLESSING OF A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST: Joel 2: 23-24: God is a generous God, when He blesses, there can be no doubts that the blessings are from Him. His promise is for the early rain so that the seeds will grow and also the latter rain to ripen the grains for harvest. The harvest will be a bountiful one because the storehouses will be overflowing because the crops will come to maturity. All will rejoice and worship the Lord for His many blessings.

4. THE BLESSING OF RESTORATION: Joel 2:25-27: Nothing that happens in our lives goes unnoticed by God, He promised to restore all. When we were stripped and left empty by the locust, He promised to restore that was eaten by them, the barrenness will be restored to an abundance, all devastations will be restored, the harvest will be plentiful. Every hurt that has eaten away our joy will be restored with joy and gladness. When He restores, He not just replenishes what was taken away, He restores with an abundance. He is very generous towards those who are His.

Verse twenty-six says “You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; Then My people will never be put to shame.” All will know that He is with His people. Many people are willing to testify after the Lord brought them out of difficult situations and speak of what He did. We should not wait until we are delivered to start praising and worshipping God, we must practice praising and worshipping Him while we are going through our struggles. Praise Him for His Sovereignty's, His goodness, faithfulness, mercy and grace and His promises. He said He would be with us when we go through the waters, the river and the fire they will have no effect on us because we belong to Him. (Isaiah 43:1-2)

We need to rely on His promises at all times, no matter what we are going through our faith should be strong and be like Job, who while he was being afflicted declared that thou He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even though worms are destroying my body yet in the flesh I shall see God, Job 13: 15, 19-26. When faith is active fear will disappear. These blessings are wonderful but notice they are all material blessings which will not last forever. Too many times we focus on the temporary things and are satisfied with them and forget the most important blessings. We are told to set our minds on things above and not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:2) When our minds are set on things of the kingdom, the things of the world will have less effect on us. The best is saved for the last.

The next study will cover verses 28-32, the Spiritual Blessings.