

Hello. /We will begin the 12<sup>th</sup> lecture on the Minor Prophets. /Today's message starts at Joel 2:12. /The Israelites had enjoyed a life of stability. /However, they abandoned the grace of God. /They worshiped idols.

/The people fell into materialism and hedonism. /God wanted them to realize their sin. /That is why God sent the disaster of locusts and drought. /The book of Joel explains the reasons why these things happened.

/Joel was a man of God who understood the situation of the time. /Joel was a spiritual leader. /We need spiritual leaders to explain the things that happen in our lives. /Also, we need to listen to the warnings they give to us.

/We must not keep ignoring the warnings issued by God's servants. /We must not let the frequent warnings in our lives lead to a sudden disaster that destroys us completely.

/Verses 12-20 tell the people to return to God even if they received God's punishment. /It warns the people to fall into God's mercy and be restored. /We can be in tough situations as a result of punishment. /Even then, when we return to God, there is hope. /God says he will fill us with the Holy Spirit.

/Verse 12. Please read. /"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

/God is telling the people to return when they are being disciplined. /By doing this, they will avoid a greater punishment. /The bells of warning are ringing, and now it is the time for them to return. /The verse also speaks to us, telling us to fast, weep and mourn. /It is telling us to control ourselves and bring us to obedience.

/We need to return to the presence of God. / "Yet even now" is saying that the punishment has begun, but it is not too late. /All we need to do is return to God. /Then, God will stop his punishment and restore us.

/When God's people commit sins, God sends his prophets to warn them. /If the people continue sinning, then God punishes them. /He lets his people hear the reason for their punishment through the prophets. /When they listen to God, there is hope.

/But when we continue to stubbornly go against God, destruction will come suddenly. /The verse says, "Return to me with all your heart." /It is important to know where our heart is. /Where do you place your heart?

/Are your hearts with the money, fame, pleasure, and entertainment of the world? /We must not allow our hearts to be stolen by these things. /We need to put our hearts in God. /We need to put our hearts in spiritual things.

/I hope you put your hearts in doing work for the kingdom of God. /I hope you put your hearts into the things of the world to come and in saving souls. /There is hope only when

we return to God. /It is the same for the individual and the family. /It is the same for the church and the nation.

/When we return to God, we find hope. /This is because in God, there is everything. /There is life and peace. /There is satisfaction and happiness. /I hope you discover and enjoy these things.

/Verse 13. / and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

/The verse says, “Rend your hearts and not your garments.” /This means to stay away from repentance that is formal and ritualistic. /It means to prepare a broken spirit before God. /God seeks broken and repenting souls.

/In the Old Testament, the believers tore their garments when they repented. /But this procedure became habitual, so their hearts were the same while their garments were torn. /God seeks a weeping and repenting spirit from us.

/God is truly good. /The prophet Joel speaks of four things. /God is gracious. /God is merciful. /God is slow to anger.

/God’s great love for us turns his punishment away from us. /We need to remember these four characteristics of God. /It would be better if we memorize them.

/The gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and loving God who turns his punishment away from us is a good God. /Although we have sinned, if we repent and return to God, there is hope. /Because God is gracious and merciful, he accepts us.

/God’s heart is the heart of the father of the prodigal son. /When the prodigal son returned, the father bathed him. /He put a gold ring on his finger. /He gave him new clothes. /And he slaughtered a calf and threw a feast. /The father restored the son’s authority.

/This is the heart of the father. /God promises to treat us with mercy when we return. /He saves us from destruction. /He forgives our sins. /He has compassion for us. /He moves us far away from our sins.

/If we return to God, he forgets our old sins. /And he does not punish us. /We need to repent of our sins, one by one, before God. /Many people do not like being told to repent. /Do you feel the same way?

/It is not a proper attitude towards God. /We need to repent and be covered in God’s mercy. /Then, there is hope for the individual. /There is hope for the church. /We need to remember this.

/There must also be more people who seek honesty. /Then, the entire city can be spared of God's wrath.

/Verse 14. /Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God?

/Although our sin may be heavy, we need to repent. /Then God will forgive us of our sins and bless us. /Then, we can give our grain offering and drink offering once again. / "Who knows" is said in the verse because due to sin, the day of destruction was near.

/From now on, we must understand this. /Opportunity is formed from the moment we repent. /God tells us to repent even in the midst of our punishment. /This is because God cannot bless a dirty vessel. /Thus, we must keep our holiness before God.

/Verse 15. /Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly;

/Zion refers to Jerusalem. /That is why Jerusalem is sometimes called Zion. /The verse says, "Blow the trumpet in Zion." /It is telling the church and the people of Israel to wake up. /It calls for them to blow the trumpet, consecrate a fast, and call a solemn assembly.

/Personally, we need to be poor in spirit when we repent. /It also means that we need to call a solemn assembly and start a national movement of repentance. /When everyone repents together in a movement, God is happy. /In Korea, there was a huge movement of revival.

/It happened in 1907. /The location was Pyeongyang. /A national revival movement occurred. /Through the movement, there was great revival in the nation of Korea. /It is one reason why the Korean church grew so much. /When we all repent together, God is very pleased.

/Verse 16. /gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber.

/God wants the Israelites, who have become dirty with sin, to become holy again. /The people of Israel put the world as their center. /They were centered on the pleasures of the world. /They put material possessions as their core.

/It is telling them to leave the place they are in and come to a place of repentance. /They need to engage in extensive, holy repentance. /The elders must repent first, and the young child and nursing infant should participate as well.

/The verse does not exempt the bridegroom or the bride. /Before God, there is no exemption when there is nationwide repentance. /God wants for all of us to be in a place like this.

/Verse 17. /Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, “Spare your people, O LORD, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

/It says, “Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests weep.” /The vestibule is an entrance on the east side of the temple. /It was a place where the brothers engaged in fellowship. /The “altar” refers to the altar of burnt offerings. /It was the place where the priests carried out their duties.

/God tells them to repent there. /God has given us a duty and mission. /It means for us to repent of not being able to fulfill our duties. /When we repent, we must hold on to God’s mercy.

/Also, we must make sure we do not disgrace the work of God. /We need to earnestly seek to prevent God’s name from being disgraced. /When the believer does wrong, God’s name is cursed. /Then, God’s glory is hidden. /Verses 18-20 include warnings to the Israelites and details about their enemies’ destruction.

/Verse 18. /Then the LORD became jealous for his land and had pity on his people.

/When we repent in prayer, God listens to our prayers. /God is merciful with us, and with his burning love, he forgives us. /Thus, we need to know that God’s real intentions are not to punish us. /God’s heart loves those who repent.

/God’s heart loves people who repent. /God treats us as his beloved children. /Therefore, when we sin, he works for us with a saddened heart. /God’s love is passionate. /God shows his mercy to his people. /He is the father, the God, of our spirits.

/Verse 19. /The LORD answered and said to his people, “Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.

/God listens to their prayers. /God gives them the grace of restoration. /He gives them grains to harvest. /He makes their grape farming go well. /Their olive trees grow in abundance. /God makes everything better again.

/We too need to receive this blessing. /It is truly important that we receive God’s answer. /When we do not know God’s grace, we are not satisfied or thankful. /But when God gives us his grace, we are grateful and satisfied.

/This is why God says, “And you will be satisfied.” / “I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.” /God promises to give the repenting Israel grace and victory.

/Verse 20. /“I will remove the northerner far from you, and drive him into a parched and desolate land, his vanguard into the eastern sea, and his rear guard into the western sea; the stench and foul smell of him will rise, for he has done great things.

/God says he will defeat Israel’s enemies because they have repented. /It is important that we stand before God. /Then, God will defeat our enemies.

/God reveals his loving forgiveness, /and he gives us our spirit’s satisfaction, stability, economic prosperity, and political stability. /Therefore, we need to live in the presence of God.

/When we repent, we are at peace with God. /Job 22:21 says, “Agree with God, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you.” /Verses 21-27 tell of restoration in Zion and in all things of the world.

/Verse 21. /“Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice, for the LORD has done great things!

/The land is not a living creature. But it tells the land to be glad and rejoice. /Why does the verse say this? /It says this because the land was cursed due to the sins of men. /When the people went against God, God intervened by altering the environment. /There was famine and disaster.

/Today’s world is facing environmental issues. /Destruction and pollution of the environment is a serious problem. /All of this happened because of mankind’s sins. /When we return before God, God will restore the environment. /That is why he tells the land to rejoice.

/Verse 22. /Fear not, you beasts of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit; the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

/The verse tells the beasts of the field to not be afraid. /God says this because he will undo the famine. /Up until now, God’s punishment destroyed the grass, but now, there will be restoration.

/When the people repent and return to God, the land will heal as well. /Grass, trees, and animals will be healed. /The environment will be restored. /Although a nation may be in the ruins of war, /through faith in God, everything will be restored.

/Verse 23. /“Be glad, O children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given the early rain for your vindication; he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the latter rain, as before.

/God told the land and beasts to rejoice in nature’s restoration. /Now, thirdly, God speaks to his people. /He says, “Rejoice in the LORD your God.”

/He does not tell them to rejoice because the land is restored and the animals are numerous. /He wants them to rejoice in God. /We oftentimes rejoice in the things that God has given us rather than God himself.

/We need to keep God, who has given us everything, in our hearts at all times. /Then, we will be able to use the things he has given us appropriately. /God will fill us up with more when we do this.

/God blesses us with plenty when we stand properly before God and walk in his ways. /He gives us health. /He gives us the environment. /He gives us an abundant life. /Please remember these things. /The early rain comes in the middle of October.

/It rains before it is time to plant the seed. /The late rain falls in April. /It allows the plants to bear fruit. /God sends down the appropriate amount of early and late rains. /When the rain falls, the barren land of Israel became a hundred times more fruitful.

/If God does not send the rains, the land of Canaan quickly becomes a desert. /It becomes a land in which people and animals cannot live. /Then and now, God intervenes in our lives by changing the environment around us.

/Verse 24. /“The threshing floors shall be full of grain; the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

/The threshing floors are full of grain. /The vats overflow with wine and oil. /This happens because God has blessed them. /This happens because God looks over their lives. /It is because God restores. /God gives them grace.

/This is because God interferes in our lives. /God restores us in amazing ways. /He does this to our environment. /Are we facing any difficulties or problems? God will solve those problems for us.

/The important question is “How sincerely are we returning to God? /Are we sincerely serving him? That is the important question.

/Verse 25. /I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you.

/When God interfered, the locusts caused a lot of damage. /But if the people repent before God, he returns to them what they had and many times more. /He compensates and adds to their losses that happened during the disasters that came upon them.

/But the most important thing of all is that we stand properly before God. /If we stand properly before God, God will give us his mercy in abundance. /Where else would we find a love like God’s love?

/Verse 26. /“You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

/God says he will deal with them wondrously. /Who does he treat wondrously? /The answer is those who repent and stand properly before God. /The Israelites thought they had perished completely. /However, God looks after them one more time.

/We will not know how abundantly blessed we are. /The verse says, “You shall praise the name of the LORD your God.” /It means that we will praise the name of the LORD our God who deals with us wondrously.

/God says, “My people shall never again be put to shame.” /For those chosen by God, there is temporary shame and punishment. /But there cannot be eternal shame. /God accepts those who are at fault but have repented and returned to him.

/Verse 27. /You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

/Although a person may have sinned and received punishment, God accepts him if he repents and returns to him. /God compensates according to the scale of our punishment. /He makes it so that we no longer are shamed. /Where else can we find a God like this? /God is the only one.

/Verses 28-32 say that in the last days, God will pour out his Spirit. /In our spiritual lives, there are times when we feel discouraged. /It is during those times that we need the Holy Spirit. /The Holy Spirit helps us. /I hope that we will always be filled with the Holy Spirit. /The person with the Holy Spirit can live a triumphant life.

/Verse 28. /“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

/ “And it shall come to pass afterward” is interpreted as the “end of days” in Acts 2:17. /The end of days will bring upon a period of hardships as in the days of Joel. /If we repent during the last days and return to God, we will experience his great grace.

/God says he will pour out his Spirit to those who repent. /In the Old Testament, the power of the Holy Spirit is given to a few special people. /Now, God promises to pour out his Spirit on everyone.

/As the prophecy predicted, the Holy Spirit came upon everyone in the room during the Pentecost. /God speaks of prophesy, dreams, and visions. /These are instruments by which God gives his revelations and grace. /God says he will pour his revelations and grace on every person.

/Verse 29. /Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

/God pours out his Spirit on both men and women. /Servant and master alike receive the Holy Spirit. /It means that in today's world, there is no segregation between Gentiles and the Israelites.

/Verse 30. /“And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke.

/When God's work of salvation happens, the devil will be at work as well. /It happened with the early church, and it happens today. /Where there is the power of the Gospel, the devil displays his works. /Also, God's judgment will take place.

/Verse 31. /The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

/Jesus will return. /It will be the day of judgment. /Before Jesus comes back, the sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood. /Jesus himself spoke of the signs of the end of days in Matthew 24. /All these things will happen before Jesus's second coming.

/Verse 32. /And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

/Before God's judgment happens, “everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” /It means believing in Jesus Christ and seeking him. /When the Gospel is preached, those who are to be saved are the “survivors.”

/We need to be the survivors. /We need to call on the name of the LORD. /Also, we must do our best to find these survivors. /We need to do our best to spread the Gospel. /We are living in a difficult time.

/The world is becoming darker each day. /It is a time of pain. /God's work is active, but the devil's work is active as well. /Good people fight to do good. /Evil people work hard to do evil.

/The Lord's second coming is near. /We need to look forward to his second coming and live according to our faith. /There is a term “Maranatha.” /It means “Come, O Lord” in Aramaic. /Our faith needs to become a faith of Maranatha.

/Dear believers! Let us live by sincerely yearning for the Lord's second coming. /Then God will see us as the survivors. /When we stand before God, we need to enter his glorious place.

/This ends the twelfth lecture on the Minor Prophets. /Thank you.