

# XXXIX

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

### Leader Conversation Guide – XXXIX: Joel

#### Main Idea

The book of Joel may be short, but its message is powerful and deeply relevant. Speaking to the people of Judah after a devastating locust plague, Joel reveals that what they are experiencing is more than a natural disaster—it is a spiritual wake-up call. Through vivid imagery, God calls His people to recognize the seriousness of sin and understand that while sin leads to judgment, judgment is never His final word.

Instead of empty displays of sorrow, Joel calls for true repentance—“rend your heart and not your garments.” This kind of repentance leads to restoration. God reveals Himself as gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, promising to restore what was lost and to pour out His Spirit on all people. As we begin our discussion, let’s open our hearts to the Lord who invites us to return to Him with hope, trusting that He renews, restores, and brings life to all who call on His name.

**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

#### Make it Practical:

##### 1. We Have a Responsibility to Pass On Our Faith

- God calls His people to intentionally teach the next generation about who He is and what He’s done.
- Faith is not meant to stop with us—it is meant to be told, modeled, and lived out.
- Scripture: Joel 1:3; Deuteronomy 6:6–7; Judges 2:10–12; Ephesians 6:4

##### 2. Sin Leads to Judgment, but God Invites Us to Return

- A clear spiritual pattern: Blessing can lead to pride, pride to forgetting, and forgetting to judgment.
- The wages of sin is death—but God’s heart is always calling His people back.
- Scripture: Romans 6:23; Joel 1:4; 2:12–13

##### 3. True Repentance Brings Restoration and Outpouring

- Repentance is not just outward sorrow—it is a heart-level return to God.
- God is gracious and compassionate, eager to restore what was lost.
- His restoration includes renewal, provision, and the promise of His Spirit poured out on all people.
- Scripture: Joel 2:13; 2:18–19; 2:25; 2:28–29, 32

## Talk About It

- Joel calls the people to remember what God has done and to tell the next generation. What are some ways faith can unintentionally become silent in our homes or communities, and what intentional steps can help keep the story of God active and alive?
- The sermon described a cycle of blessing, pride, forgetting, judgment, and repentance. Where do you see this cycle at work in your own life or in culture today, and how can recognizing it help you respond differently when God is trying to get your attention?
- God invites His people to “rend their hearts” instead of just changing outward behavior. What is the difference between feeling sorry about sin and truly returning to the Lord, and what might genuine repentance look like in a practical, everyday situation this week?

**God’s judgment is never meant to be the end of the story—it is a loving invitation to return, repent, and experience restoration.**

## Prayer

Lord, we thank You for being gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love. Help us to respond to Your Word with humble hearts, not just outward change but true repentance that draws us closer to You. Restore what has been lost, renew our faith, and fill us with Your Spirit as we leave this place. Teach us to walk in obedience and to pass on Your truth to the next generation. We return to You with trust and gratitude. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Next Steps

Practice heart-level repentance this week:

Take intentional time to ask God to search your heart, confess sin honestly, and return to Him fully—not just changing behavior, but renewing your devotion to Him (see Joel 2:12–13).

Tell the story of God to someone younger than you:

Share what God has done in your life with a child, student, or younger believer. Look for one intentional moment this week to pass on faith through conversation, prayer, or example (see Joel 1:3).

Trust God to restore what feels lost:

Identify an area of your life where you’ve experienced loss, dryness, or discouragement, and choose to believe God’s promise of restoration. Pray specifically for renewal and invite the Holy Spirit to work in that area (see Joel 2:25, 28).