

Rend Your Heart and Not Your Garment – 09 Jan 2005

- Joshua Daniel

Prophecy of Joel 2nd chapter from the 11th verse: And the lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?

One of our nurses testified saying that she heard of the return of Jesus. I know a man, a powerful politician who said to me, a very wealthy man, he said I know Jesus Christ will come again and when he comes I want to be on the right side. I do not know if he is still living but I would love to meet him. Having been very powerful minister whether he is still seeking to be on the right side when Jesus comes again? What is our response to be? 12th verse: therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn you even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your god: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

We all know the forms of religion, standing up, kneeling down, bowing, all these things are all known to people and people go through these motions very religiously and regularly but god says not the motions, I have had enough of these religious ritualistic motions. It's enough. You know the phrase enough is enough and surely god has the right to tell us enough is enough. I have seen enough of your hypocrisy, I have seen enough of your half-heartedness, I have seen enough of your religious humbug. Rend your hearts: there are many areas in which we have defaulted; we have come short of the glory of god. We blame all deficiencies these days upon the politicians or some people do they blame it on the church but we rarely point the fingers at ourselves. Even at prayer you see the Pharisee who stood and said I have done this, I have fasted twice a week I have given my tithes, you know I been a caring person, a giving person, I have done this, I have done that, I've not been like that old publican over there, that tax collector there. See we keep comparing ourselves with people. On those grounds we may never be indicted. We may never be come to the time when we say I am defaulting. We are saying I am better than anybody else. I am fine. But god says rend your hearts and not your garments. I think there's a lot of religion today that passes the buck, meaning we don't take the blame that we ought

to take. My brother is in this condition because I didn't prevail in prayer for him. This business of giving up, throwing in the towel and saying hey I am ready to quit. And I see a lot of people who say they are Christians saying oh nothing seems to be moving. No no no. we do not just go by the circumstances or by the appearances. We go by the promises of the word of god. If I did not go by the promises of god's word and act on those promises I would have done nothing. Particularity because my father was such a mighty man of god and saw practically all the miracles of the bible happening around him and simple people rising up over right doing the things which paul and peter did. Well, coming after him I could have said, Well, I am just a tiny Lilliputian and whatever am I going to do? Nobody is going to listen to me anyway. I am so young and daddy died while I was still very young. So I could have twiddled my thumb and said hey what am I going to do? Daddy did not leave me any rich friends or he did not have any donors or patrons who would hand out checks to him, he only trusted god for his daily bread and never asked anybody for a penny. What am I going to do now? I am inherited all this work and people have to be supported; it's not just my little family or my few small children that need to be fed, there are lot of others to be taken care of; what am I going to do? Did god fail? NO. You know friends; we are always talking about past history. The Christian life is now, today, now, today. People don't want to face today. No. See many of you may be in the position when you say I have no money. Many people are suffering today because of redundancies and loss of jobs and this is happening in many parts of the world because of the new technology and we don't need so many people any more after automation. So you can well be one of those who say hey what's all these religious stuff? How is it going to help me anyway? I don't even know how to feed my children. Tough times, yes my dear friends, tough times, I have known and pass through tough times and I still do. You know when enormous bills, not ordinary bills, enormous bills have to be paid. The bible says cursed is the man that maketh the arm, the flesh is arm that trusteth in man but blessed is the man whose hope the LORD is. You know we know it all but we don't do it and god says you need to rend your hearts. You don't have heart religion, you've got head religion. You know what we need today is heart religion, those truths of god's word applied in daily life. It's very beautiful when you see the word of god applied in daily life. God's word here is, rend your hearts and not your garments. How many times have you been confronted by the fact that you have a proud heart? What is one small

indication of a proud heart? A proud heart finds it very hard to say sorry. Whether it is to the husband or to the wife or to the daughter or to the son; I find that there are many occasions when I must very sincerely say sorry. I find that in business quarters. People do not like to admit that they are wrong even when they are defaulted on their word they don't want to say sorry, they don't want to admit error because they say we would then be liable. You see this man may go out and say there's a breach of contract and so sue me in the court or what, so I can't say, I can't admit. Alright, that's what I see. And so that kind of mindset comes into smaller things as well and they will find it hard to say sorry. What is it? It's nothing but the pride of the heart. And what does the bible say; the lord knoweth the proud man afar off. The first thing that the lord taught us is, repent for the kingdom of god is at hand. That's the initial and the basic and the first teaching of the New Testament. Repent! Turn around. Suppose your son is running across the traffic, you know mid-block crossing, not at the lights, is running across, what do you do? Cry frantically, you are going to be hit, turn back, that's what god is saying. Turn around, repent. And when we are not prepared to do that, let me tell you my dear friends, there will be no healing. That is why some of our church services go on and on and on, no healing. No works of god, what do you mean? Is this just some human emotion? Is it just the preacher running a trade? Getting the money out of your valets? It seems like that to me and it's wicked. Where is god at work? Where are the works of god? God says rend your hearts and not your garments and turn unto the lord your god for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness and repenteth him of the evil.