



Sunday – December 10, 2023

The Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills church of Christ

2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland, FL 33805
(863) 688-4336

Schedule of Services

Sunday

9:00 AM Bible Study
9:50 AM Worship
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study

Visit our Website:

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com
For Sermon & Class outlines,
Bible Study Materials and
Other Information.

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Live Streams and Video
Archives.

Elders

Bob Marschall
Leon Miller
Larry Wisdom

Deacons

Bucky Day
Sherman Johnson
Michael Sadler
David Williams

Evangelist

Chuck Kozens

REND YOUR HEART, AND NOT YOUR GARMENTS

By John Edwards

Joel 2:12-13 – *“Therefore, also now, saith the Lord, turn ye 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”*

The book of Joel is a call to repentance. A plague of locusts, described as the Lord’s army of invaders, brings desolation and devastation to the land of Judah (Joel 1:7; 2:3). This terrible day of the Lord’s judgment is designed to bring the people to repentance. In order for the Lord to remove His army and bring blessing and restoration to the land, the people must do as the Lord says: *“...turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning”* (Joel 2:12). When Joel called the people to repentance, he said, *“...rend your heart, and not your garments...”* (Joel 2:13). What is meant by this contrast?

FIGURE OF SPEECH. This statement of Joel contains a figure of speech called Syllepsis; or, Combination, in which there is the repetition of the sense without the repetition of the word. E.W. Bullinger notes: “Here the word ‘rend’ is used only once, but with two significations: in the former sentence it is used figuratively; in the latter literally—the heart not being rent in the same sense in which garments are rent” (Figures of Speech Used in the Bible, p. 296).

RENDING GARMENTS. “Rend” is used of garments to describe the ancient practice of tearing one’s clothes in grief. This action was often accompanied by putting on sackcloth. When Jacob believed his son, Joseph, had been rent in pieces, he *“rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days”* (Gen. 37:34). When Abner was killed by Joab, David ordered, *“Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner”* (2 Sam. 3:31). When King Ahab heard the word of the Lord, *“he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth”* (1 Ki. 21:27). When great famine was in Samaria, the king *“rent his clothes; and...he had sackcloth within upon his flesh”* (2 Ki. 6:30). When Hezekiah heard Rabshakeh’s blasphemous speech, *“he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth”* (2 Ki. 19:1-2). When Mordecai knew of the decree against the Jews, he *“rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes”* (Esther 4:1-2). Esther 4:3 states, *“there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.”*

NOT PROHIBITING RENDING GARMENTS. Joel was not prohibiting rending one’s garments in repentance, any more than Jesus condemned working for perishable food in John 6:29 or Peter forbade women from wearing clothing in

1 Peter 3:3. To the contrary, Joel 2:12 says, “...turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.” This shows the Lord wanted both the inward turn and the outward expressions that accompanied such. “Tear your hearts, not just your clothes...” “And tear your heart and not merely your garments.” The lesser is denied (rending garments) to affirm the greater (rending the heart).

TRUE RENDING OF THE HEART. Outward expressions mean nothing, unless the heart is broken (Ps. 34:18; 51:17). One could go through the outward motion of rending the garment, without correcting the heart, and such would avail absolutely nothing! The point is: God doesn't want an outward show only; He wants genuine repentance.

1 Thess.5:16-18 - *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*