

JOEL: WHEN ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE

Life Group Questions | Sunday, November 3, 2019

Joel is writing after the Kingdom of Israel has divided, so he is speaking primarily to the nation of Judah which included two of the 12 tribes and the city of Jerusalem. The book of Joel is poetry. With poetry we must continually ask ourselves, *what is the meaning beneath the meaning?*

Read Joel 1:1-20. What poetic, figurative language do you see in this passage? What does that language evoke in you?

What was the author describing and what do you think he was trying to communicate? What do you see in the text that drives you to those conclusions?

When was a time that “all hell broke loose” in your life? What was that experience like? How did you relate to God in that time?

How have you seen hardship and suffering contribute to your maturity and growth?

The book of Joel calls its hearers to weep, wail, and mourn. That call is so constant in Scripture that it is an entire genre called *laments*. A lament is a passionate expression of grief or sorrow.

Read Psalm 42. The Bible doesn't tell us to repress our grief or sorrow, but to express it with gusto. What words or phrases from this lament psalm stand out to you? Is this kind of expression familiar or foreign to you? How so?

Pray together. Begin by offering prayers of lament. What feels broken in your life right now? In your community? In the world? How might you express that to God? End by **reading Psalm 42:11** aloud together.