

THE MYSTERIOUS  
***"PERHAPS OF GOD"***  
THAT RELEASES  
***"POCKETS OF MERCY"***  
(JOEL 2:13 - 14)

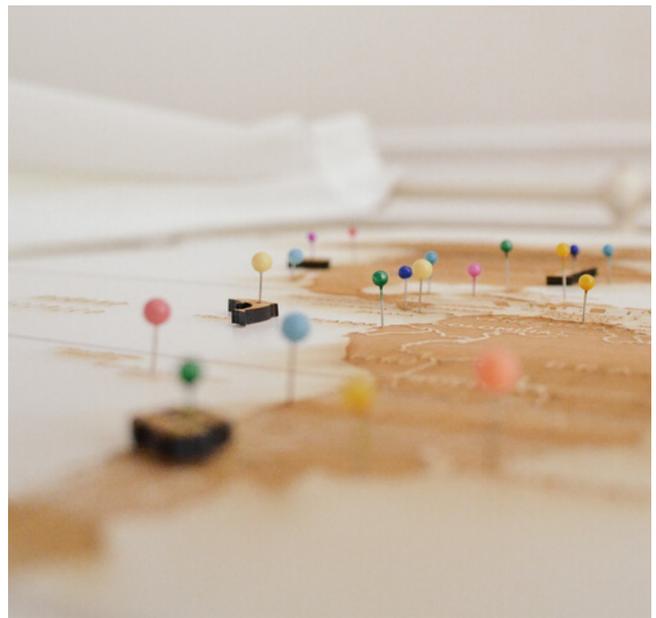
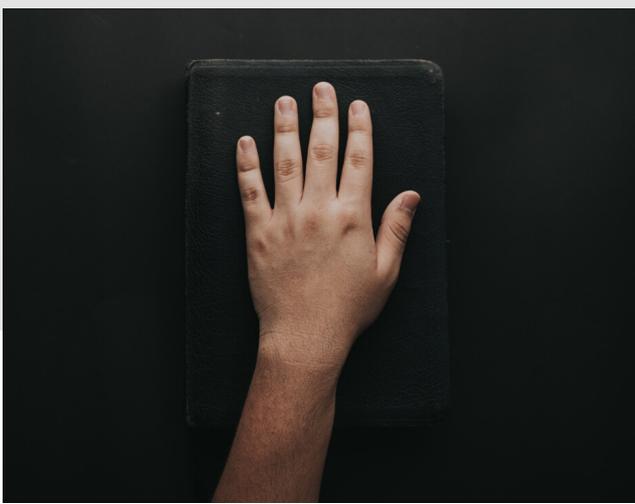


**The place of immunity from the judgment of God is to live in His favor.** Jesus' work on the cross provides us with the gift of righteousness (2 Cor. 5:17 – 21), and accepting this gift of righteousness is a necessary starting point to receiving God's favor. However, in order for God to release His favor to geographical areas in context of national crises, His people in the land also need to live in a culture of long-term corporate wholeheartedness to God. **These will be the places of greatest safety in the earth – places where His people are developing a corporate, long-term history in wholeheartedness before God.**

**As our God is One who wants to turn from judgment and leave a blessing, He wants to transform would-be “disaster zones” into “revival centers”.** This is the mystery of the grace of God. The Lord does not keep us guessing as if this was a game. Rather, He lays out clearly what He is looking for in times of crisis and judgment and the desire of His heart to bless in accordance to the response of His people.

In His judgments, God knows the full implications of all that is involved when He releases them and has many reasons behind His actions as well as His silence. He invites us to trust His heart, press in to seek Him in prayer and trust that He is merciful.

This is the **partnership** that He invites His people into. First, *God initiates* what He wants by declaring it in His Word and stirring our hearts with His desires.



Then, *we respond in obedience and through prayer* to God's initiative. Third, *God answers* our responses by releasing blessings that He withholds until He hears our cries.

In Joel's day, in light of the Babylonian invasion that Israel faced, God invited His people to cry out to Him on the premise that perhaps He would provide pockets of mercy in the midst of the invasion. Perhaps He would give cities of refuge. *“Perhaps He will leave a blessing behind Him”* (Joel 2:14). In other words, He could have transformed the place that would have been a **“disaster zone” into a “revival center”** and make it a place of sovereign blessing. He was simply waiting for His people to respond and cry out to Him.

A group of people, mostly women, are shown from the chest up, clapping their hands. They are wearing dark clothing, and some have white sleeves visible. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting a church or a large gathering. The lighting is warm and focused on the hands, creating a sense of movement and energy.

***GATHER*** THE PEOPLE  
AND ***SANCTIFY*** THE  
CONGREGATION

(JOEL 2:15 - 16)



**JOEL'S SECOND TRUMPET** was the call to a sacred assembly of fasting and prayer. Fasting positions our hearts to experience the grace of God in a greater way and is an act of humbling ourselves before the Lord.

Joel called for a “sacred” assembly because these gatherings had to be sacred in their priority for the people of Israel. **It was not the time for business-as-usual** for the nation and all other schedules – whether ministry, personal, or work had to be laid aside to make seeking God the top priority. God especially wanted His leaders to set apart people under them for the purposes of seeking Him. In our time, this means re-directing whatever resources necessary – whether time, money or manpower spent on other projects towards gathering together to fast and pray.

IT MAY SEEM EXTREME,  
BUT EXTREME TIMES  
REQUIRE EXTREME  
MEASURES.

To make it clear that this was a solemn assembly that no one was to be exempted from, the prophet Joel called everyone from the elders to the children to newborn babies to assemble. Even newly-weds were to forsake their customary first-year exemption from duties (Deut 24:5) to gather and cry out to God. This was crucial since absolutely no one would be spared from the coming invasion of the Babylonian army.

It is the same in our day. **Gathering to pray is not just for the intercessors or the prayer ministries.** God’s Word is clear. He wants everyone – young, old, male, female, pastors, congregants, ministers, marketplace workers – to gather together to pray.

# GIVE OURSELVES TO EARNEST PRAYER

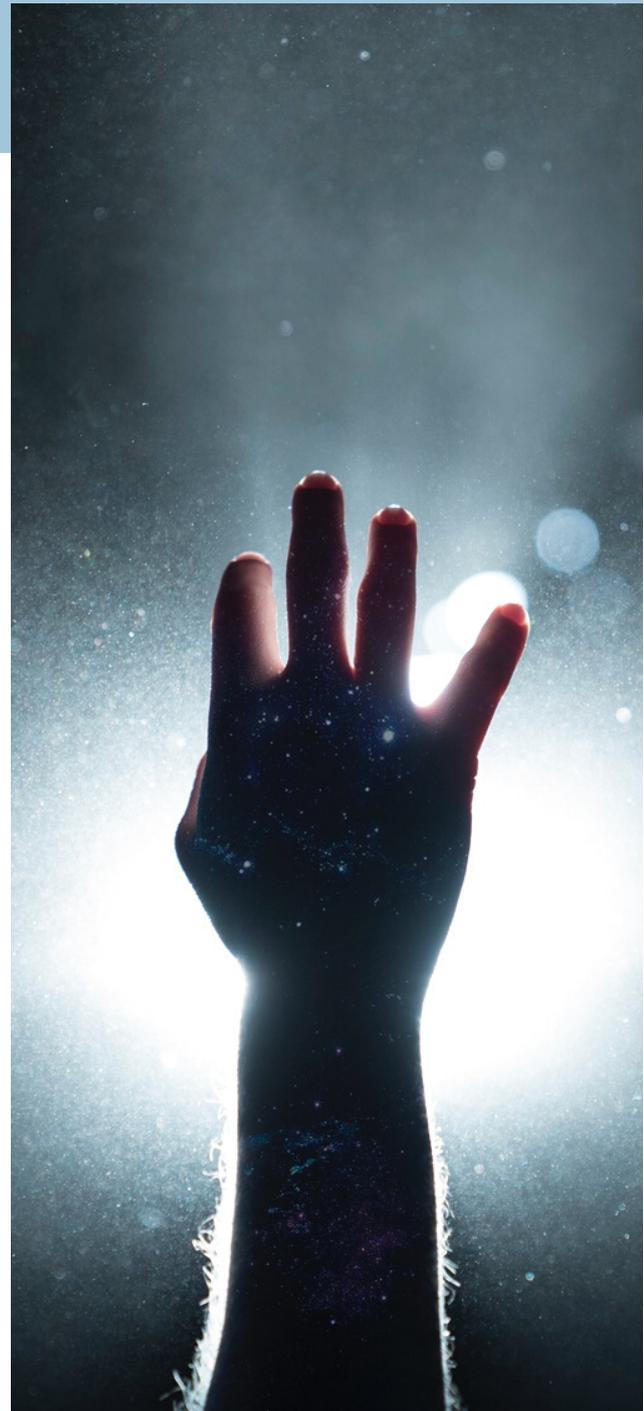
(JOEL 2:17)

Joel called the priests or the leadership to lead the people in earnest prayer. God does not want prayers out of duty or routine but as His people, we cry out for His visitation and mercy with earnest hearts. In Joel's day, these particular prayers were prayed in light of a coming military invasion from Babylon, so that the nations would not rule over Israel. Today, these prayers still apply in light of the crisis we find ourselves in.

Joel gave two specific prayers that the priests were to pray in light of the coming crisis.

First, **"Spare Your people, O God!"** This was a cry for God to release supernatural protection, provision and direction to Israel, and should be our cry to Him today.

Second, **"Do not give Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is your God?'"** Just like in Joel's day, we need to ask the Lord not to let the nations of the earth mock the people of God as though God were not among us. We remind the Lord that His own reputation is at stake; we beseech Him to come to vindicate His people for the sake of His name! God Himself wants to bring glory to His Son's name by vindicating His prayerful saints, showing Himself to be the One who is present with those who fear Him.



The way that the harvest will come in from all nations is when the unbelievers recognize that believers have been given a dynamic love relationship with a God who acts on behalf of His people. They will recognize that those who obey Him experience His power.

When the people of God come together to seek Him in wholehearted corporate prayer and fasting, **God will hear and answer**. Before the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, Jesus told the disciples to tarry in the upper room in prayer (Acts 1:8). His disciples pressed in together for ten days of night and day prayer before the Holy Spirit came upon them suddenly in power! Of course their ten days of prayer happened during the kairos prophetic timing of God.

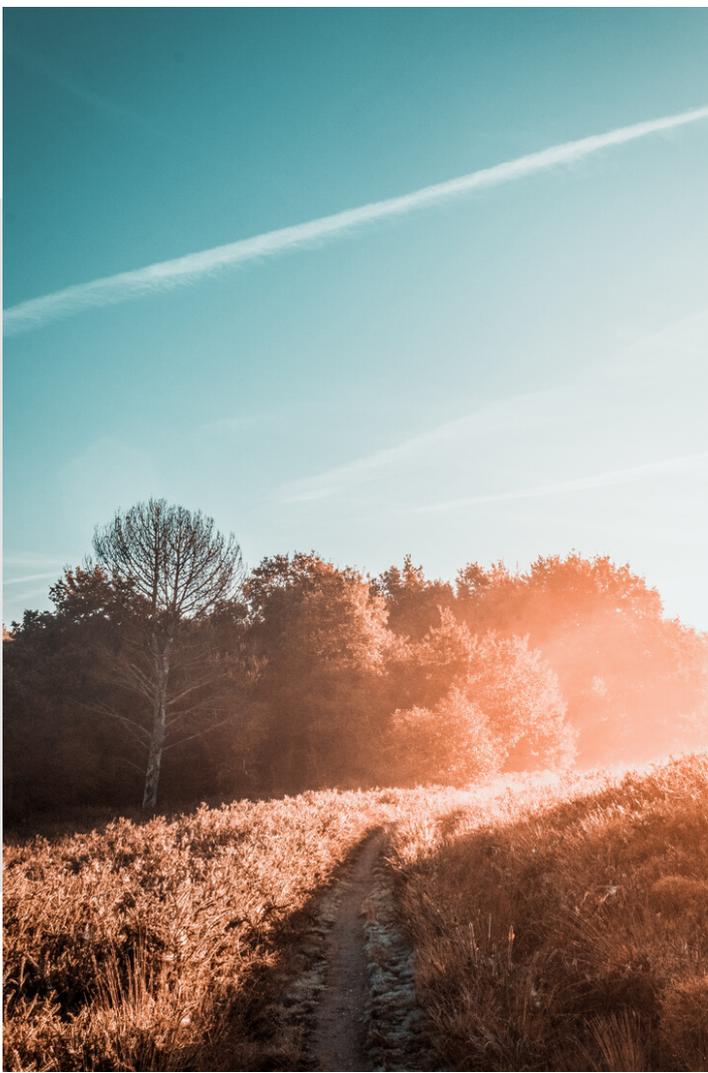
**WE ARE GOING TO SEE  
THIS SAME DIVINE  
PATTERN PLAY OUT  
AGAIN IN OUR DAY!**

People with wholehearted love for God who gather in long-term corporate prayer and fasting will result in His unprecedented power breaking forth in our day.

A “suddenly” of God will come in response to the people of God. What we saw in Acts 1 and 2 was the very pattern described by the prophet Joel. God’s people gathered in consecration, fasting and prayer, believing and claiming the promise of God (Joel 2:12 – 17), and suddenly, the power of God broke in!

Do we see that this same pattern will apply to God’s promise of a future unprecedented end-time outpouring?

**THE UNPRECEDENTED  
OUTPOURING OF GOD’S  
SPIRIT IN JOEL 2:28 – 32  
WILL BE THE RESULT  
OF THE GOD’S PEOPLE  
RESPONDING IN  
ACCORDANCE TO  
JOEL 2:12 – 17!**



# CONCLUSION

It is at this critical time in human history that the Lord is looking for ones who will hear Him and respond to stand in the gap in the midst of crisis. Esther 4:14 says, *"Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* It is time for each person to arise and be counted in this hour. It is time to leave "business-as-usual" behind. It is time for His people to awaken to earnest prayer and fasting.

May God grant us the spirit of the sons of Issachar, so that we will have understanding of the times and know what to do (1 Chr. 12:32). Let us rise up in such a time as this, responding to His call to rend our hearts and gather in solemn assemblies in corporate intercession and worship!



# ac•tion

/'ækʃ(ə)n/

noun

*An act that one consciously wills and that may be characterized by physical or mental activity.*

# LINKS

Full Article Link: [bit.ly/makingsense\\_covid19](https://bit.ly/makingsense_covid19)  
Join us in Sacred Assembly: [bit.ly/prayerroomschedule](https://bit.ly/prayerroomschedule)

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# RESOURCES



Visit [www.joel2lifestyle.com](https://www.joel2lifestyle.com) for 52 weeks of discipleship and study on the Joel 2 Lifestyle that God is looking for.



Visit [bit.ly/forerunnermessages](https://bit.ly/forerunnermessages) to browse and purchase our available Study Guides and Teaching Series.



## IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

At the International House of Prayer – One Thing Ministries, the Lord has called us to be a Forerunner Community committed to:

- *Proclaim the Beauty of Jesus and His Glorious Return;*
- *Prepare the people of God to walk in the Fullness of God's Purposes and*
- *Participate in the Fulfilment of the Great Commission from the place of 24/7 Prayer with Worship.*

The Lord has invited us as a community of believers to be the friends-of-the-Bridegroom-type **forerunners** who prepare ourselves and others for the unique dynamics of the End Times.

As a **missions base**, we seek to equip the people of God with the forerunner spirit and to empower them with apostolic grace and prophetic anointing to preach the Gospel, proclaim the return of Jesus, do the works of justice, plant Houses of Prayer and disciple nations.

The **heart** of our missions base is 24/7 worship and prayer; thus, we seek to establish a 24/7 House of Prayer in Singapore – a perpetual solemn assembly in prayer and fasting in the spirit of the tabernacle of David, and to pray for the release of the fullness of God's promise, purpose and power for our generation.