

THE DAY OF THE LORD

Joel 2:1-2

Ash Wednesday, March 6, 2019

“Blow the trumpet in Zion. Sound the alarm on my holy hills. For the day of the Lord is coming.”

In times past, animal horns were blown like a trumpet to call people to worship or other events or to sound an alarm. In today's scripture, Joel announces that the day of the Lord is coming and says it will be a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Is that what you would have expected? Or would you have expected the day the Lord comes to be a cloud free day with abundant sunshine, a day of happiness and joy?

Joel's reference to darkness, gloom and blackness reminds us of God's judgement for our sins and the hope of reconciliation with God through our repentance and his grace. As we enter this solemn period of Lent, we must reflect on those areas where we have fallen short by not loving God or our neighbors. We must throw off our spiritual complacency, drop our defenses and open ourselves to an honest assessment of our failures. That is not easy to do!

As we do so, however, we become reconciled with God and free ourselves from the weight of the times that we have failed to live as we should. The forgiveness that flows from God's grace allows us to move forward as unburdened and free people. For which we say - Thanks be to God!

Prayer: True God, as we enter this period of Lent, strengthen us to do an honest assessment of our sins and failures so that we may be reconciled with you and healed by your grace. Amen.

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