> The vine is dried up and the fig tree is withered; the pomegranate, the palm and the apple tree— all the trees of the field—are dried up. Surely the people’s joy is withered away.
> — *Joel 1:12*

Book: Old Testament / Joel
Topics: food, harvest, joy, sadness, wine

Interpretation:
The Book of Joel is one of the 12 prophets of the Old Testament and is known for its apocalyptic message. The Book of Joel is divided into two parts: in the first, the prophet describes the invasion of locusts that devastated the land; in the second, Joel's message is a message of hope for everyone who repents and surrenders to God.

The reason for this barrenness in the verse Joel 1:12 is the iniquities of people.

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Attention! This is one of the possible interpretations based on the comments of famous theologians, which may differ from each other. If the interpretation is taken from other languages, then there may be a distortion of meaning when translating the language. *Matthew 7:7-8*

> “Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”
> — *Joel 2:12*

Book: Old Testament / Joel
Topics: conversion, fasting, heart, sadness

Interpretation:
In *Joel 2:12* we can find God’s call to His people to turn to Him with all their hearts. This verse invites us to consider the importance of conversion and repentance in our lives.

The word *“return”* means to turn back or return. Spiritually, conversion involves a change in attitude and behavior that separates us from sin and brings us closer to God. Conversion is not only an act of faith, but an ongoing process that requires commitment, effort, and persistence.

Conversion begins with repentance, a deep feeling of pain and sorrow for our sins. Repentance leads us to admit that we have failed and that we need God’s forgiveness. This pain and crying are necessary for us to change our ways and be transformed by God.

The call is to return to God with all our hearts. This means that our conversion must be complete and sincere. We cannot simply change our appearance or our actions, but we must change our minds and our hearts. Total conversion involves total surrender to God and unconditional surrender.

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> Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.
>
> *— Joel 2:13*

Book: Old Testament / Joel
Topics: Forgiveness, grace, heart, love, patience, reliability

Interpretation:
Joel 2:13 teaches us the importance of sincere repentance and turning to God. In this verse, God asks mankind to rend our hearts, not our garments, meaning that we must show true repentance and not just show outward pain for our actions.

The meaning of this phrase is important because it was common at the time to show pain and regret by tearing our garments, but this was nothing more than a superficial display that did not reach the heart. God emphasizes the need for sincere repentance in order to be forgiven and cleansed of our mistakes.

Turning to God is also a key theme in this verse. To turn means to leave behind the wrong path and follow the right path that God has prepared for our lives. God is merciful, meaning that He is always ready to forgive us if we repent from our hearts and turn to Him.

It is important to note that God does not seek to punish us, but rather, He loves us and wants our well-being. He is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, which means His patience and love are limitless. God grieves for us and always wants to help us correct our ways. That is why we should always be open to repentance and conversion, as this will lead us to a life of grace and peace.

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