

WEEK 4 | THE VALLEY OF DECISION
JOEL 3:1-21



This is the last week in our series on Joel. We're asking questions about the nature of suffering and what God wants to do with us in the midst of it.

- 1.) What do you think of when you hear about "Judgment Day?" What do people in our culture think when they hear about the notion that God will judge?
- 2.) Read Joel 3:1-8. Who is being judged? For what reasons?
Do you see any connections between what Joel identifies as sin in his time and what is happening in our time?
- 3.) Read Joel 3:9-15. Can you pick out the three metaphors for God that Joel uses in these verses? What is he trying to communicate?
- 4.) What is the Valley of Decision? Who is doing the deciding?
- 5.) How can a belief in a God who judges affect the way you live?
- 6.) Read Joel 3:16-21. What do you observe about God's rescue? When do you think this will happen?
- 7.) Joel's description of the Valley of Decision shows this is a place where God's justice and mercy meet (see especially verse 16). How is the Cross of Christ also a place where justice and mercy meet? (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Spiritual Exercise: *Each week we're trying to give one option for "working out your faith" in a practical way. Two options this week:*

- 1.) Download and begin to use an Advent devotional this year to help prepare your heart to celebrate Christmas. Some great ones can be found here (<http://cardiphonia.org/adventxmas/liturg-and-devos/>).
- 2.) Watch Jacob's Story – a 13 minute mini-documentary about a man that once made his living by trafficking women and children for the purposes of commercial sex. Strong links

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made to the connection between pornography and the demand that drives the human trafficking industry. (<http://vimeo.com/31795904>)