

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

Church of Christ
371 W. Main Street
Greenwood, IN 46142
(317)888-8288

www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org

VOLUME 8 NO. 14

June 5, 2011

Rend Your Heart

By **Tim Johnson**

**"So rend your heart,
and not your garments; return
to the Lord your God, for He is
gracious and merciful"
(Joel 2:13).**

Rending one's garments was the action of one experiencing distress. Such actions, however, might be only superficial. According to Joel, that which really needed rending was the heart. One could tear his garments into shreds and still not be right with God.

The basic need is the recognition of the guilt of sin and godly sorrow from a broken heart. Because of sin in his own life, David knew the kind of heart that pleases God. After his sin with Bathsheba, he wrote, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart -- these, O God, You will not despise" (Ps. 51:17). In the 34th Psalm, he further showed the vital need of the broken heart: "The Lord is near to those who

have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18).

Paul knew that, where there was no sorrow for sin, there could be no forgiving of sin, "For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation" (2 Cor. 7:10).

How Men Act

When They

Repent

by **Steve Klein**

In **Matthew 12:41**, Jesus said, "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here." According to Jesus, the men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah.

You remember the story, don't you? God had commanded Jonah, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry

2

out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me" (Jonah 1:2). Now Nineveh was not only a city filled with wickedness, it was also the capital of the Assyrians, hated enemies of the Israelites. Jonah didn't want to go. He fled from God's presence. However, after being given some quality time in the belly of a fish to reflect and pray, Jonah decided to obey God. Jonah walked through the city proclaiming the judgment of the Lord upon these pagan people: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" (Jonah 3:4).

The people of Nineveh repented. They "proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them" (Jonah 3:5). When word came to the king of Nineveh, "he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes." He decreed that "neither man nor beast, herd nor flock" were to eat or drink and that "every one" was to "turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hand" (Jonah 3:7-8).

The text says that, "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring

upon them" (Jonah 3:10). God can read men's hearts. He knows more about what is going on in our heads than we do ourselves. But He did not need to read the minds of the Ninevites to know that they had repented. He "saw their works, that they turned away from evil". When the men of Nineveh repented, nobody was left to wonder whether or not their repentance was genuine. Nobody was left guessing about their intention to stop committing evil. Nobody would have doubted they had actually repented of their sins.

We really need to learn this lesson from the men of Nineveh. We need to learn how to act when we repent. Repentance isn't just saying "excuse me," "my bad," or "forgive me," and then going on with our lives as if nothing happened. Repentance should produce real change in our actions. We are to "bear fruits worthy of repentance" (Matthew 3:8). I am afraid that too many of us think that our repentance should go unnoticed. We are incognito repenters! And while God hardly asks us to don sackcloth and ashes today, He does ask us to "do works befitting repentance" (Acts 26:20).

Let's resolve to turn away from sin in our lives, and make sure that we behave in such a way that folks can tell that's what we've done!

A Mixed Up World

by Frank Jamerson

Human wisdom has rejected the Bible as the word of God and has decided that man evolved from lower animals, therefore they do not want to kill animals, but many of the same people have no respect for human life, therefore advocate unrestricted abortion. It is really a mixed up world!

Some do not want to wear any article of clothing made of fur, or any other kind of animal products, use animals for research or eat meat. According to the doctrine of reincarnation, they may be harming a relative!

What does the Bible say about this? First, if it is a sin to wear animal skins, then God sinned in the garden of Eden, when he "made tunics of skin" and clothed Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21). When Noah came out of the ark, God said "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. But you shall not eat flesh with the life, that is, the blood" (Gen. 9:2,3). God did not know that it was "cruelty to animals" to eat meat. Paul said that one doctrine of those who departed from the truth would be "commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4:4,5).

John Clayton commented: "Is nature cruel? Do animals possess a sense of self that makes death a personal tragedy? The evidence suggests that the answer is No! The fact that males will frequently kill their own offspring and that many forms of life will eat a member of their group that has died suggests that there are other forces at work. Predation (preying on other animals) is not a wanton and cruel act..."

"If we recognize that living things are not unevolved men but products of a design which ensures survival of the species and are programmed to fit the design, we will be better equipped to manage our world and also will be able to understand acts in nature that many interpret as blatant unwarranted cruelty" (Does God Exist? Sept/Oct, 1990).

The theory of evolution and the Eastern religion's doctrine of reincarnation have influenced us more than most may realize. When men reject God's revelation, they get values confused and even reversed. In short, if vegetarianism is mandatory, the Bible is false!
