

JOEL

Conversational Version

1:1A Message from the LORD to Joel Son of Pethuel

Mourning over a Locust Invasion

2Listen to this, elders;

pay attention, everybody in the land.

Has anything like this ever happened in your lifetime
or your ancestors' lifetime?

3Tell your descendants about it;

they need to tell their descendants, and so on.

Joel 1:1-3

4What the cutting locusts left
the swarming locusts have eaten.

What the swarming locusts left
the hopping locusts have eaten.

What the hopping locusts left
the stripping locusts have eaten.

5Wake up, you drunks, and cry;
wail, wine drinkers,
for the sweet wine you can't find anymore.

6A nation has invaded my land,
powerful and without number.

Its teeth are like a lion's teeth;
it has fangs like a lioness.

7It's destroyed my grapevines
and ruined my fig trees.
It's stripped off their bark and thrown it away,
so their branches are bare and white.

Joel 1:4-7

8Wail like a virgin wearing burlap
for her young groom.

9The grain offerings and liquid offerings have stopped
in the LORD's Temple.

The priests, the LORD's ministers, mourn.

10The fields are ruined, the land is bare
because the grain has been destroyed,

the new wine has dried up,
the fresh oil has failed.

11Despair, farmers; wail, vinedressers,
for the wheat and barley;
the harvest is ruined.

12The grapevines have shriveled up, the fig trees have withered;
the pomegranate, palm, and apple trees as well.

The fruit trees in the orchard have dried up,
the joy among the people too.

Joel 1:8-12

A Call to Repentance

13Put on burlap and chant a dirge, priests;
wail, ministers at the altar!
Come, spend the night in burlap, ministers of God,
because the grain offerings and liquid offerings
have stopped in his Temple.

14Consecrate a fast, declare a solemn assembly;
gather the elders and the people to the LORD's Temple,
and cry out to him.

15Dread the day!
The day of the LORD is upon us,
a day of destruction that's coming from the Almighty.

16Hasn't food disappeared in front of us,
and happiness left the Temple?

17Seeds shrivel under the clods;
barns stand empty;
granaries are abandoned
because the crops have failed.

Joel 1:13-17

18The cattle are bawling!
Herds are wandering aimlessly
because there's no pasture;
flocks of sheep are bleating in misery.

19I'm calling out to you, LORD,
because fire has burned off the open range;
flames have burned up the trees in the fields.

20Even the wild animals pant for you
because the streams have dried up

and fire has scorched the pastures.

Joel 1:18-20

The Day of the LORD

2:1Blow a bugle in Zion;
sound an alarm on my holy mountain!
Let the people in the land tremble
because the day of the LORD is coming.

It's near,

2a dark and gloomy day,
a cloudy day with deep blackness.

A numerous, powerful army is spreading out
like shadows in the mountains.

There's never been anything like them before,
and there won't be for ages to come.

3Fire consumes ahead of them;
flames burn behind them.

The land is like the Orchard of Eden in front of them,
but desolation *lies* behind them;
nothing escapes.

4They look like horses;
they run like steeds.

5With rumbling like chariots,
they leap along on the hilltops—
like a crackling flame consuming stubble,
like a powerful army in battle formation.

Joel 2:1-5

6Defenders are in anguish in front of them
with faces turned pale.

7They run like warriors
and scale walls like soldiers;
they march in line
without breaking rank.

8They don't bump into one another;
each one marches straight ahead.
When they break through the defenses,
they just keep going.

9They rush at the city and
run along its walls;
they climb into houses

through windows like thieves.

- 10** The ground quakes in front of them,
 the sky shakes,
 the sun and moon go out,
 the stars grow dim. **Joel 2:6-10**

- 11** The LORD raises his voice in front of his army;
 his camp is large
 because he's strong that carries out his word.
 The day of the LORD is terrifying;
 who can survive it?

A Call to Repentance

- 12** "Yet even now," the LORD says,
*"come back to me with all your heart,
 with fasting, tears, and mourning."*
13 *Tear you hearts, not your clothes."*
 Come back to him;
 he's gracious and merciful,
 slow to get angry, full of enduring love,
 and relents from carrying out destruction.

- 14** Who knows if he'll relent
 and leave behind a blessing for you,
 the possibility of offering again
 a grain offering and a liquid offering
 for the LORD your God. **Joel 2:11-14**

- 15** Blow a bugle in Zion,
 consecrate a fast,
 declare a solemn assembly,
16 bring the people together,
 sanctify the community,
 assemble the elders,
 gather the children and nursing infants.
 Have the groom come out of his room
 and the bride leave her quarters.

- 17** Let the priests, the LORD's ministers,
 weep between the porch and altar.
 Let them say, "*Spare your people, LORD.*

*Don't make your permanent possession a disgrace,
a byword the world over.
Why should they say,
'Where's their God?'"*

Joel 2:15-17

The Lord Promises Restoration

18 Then the LORD will become zealous for his land
and take pity on his people.
19 He'll answer them,
*"I'm going to send you grain, new wine, and olive oil;
you'll be satisfied.
I'll never again make you a byword the world over.
20 I'll remove the northern threat far from you
and drive him into a parched, desolate land.
I'll drive his vanguard into the Dead Sea,
his rear guard into the Mediterranean.
The stench from rotting bodies will rise over the land."*

The Lord has done great things! **Joel 2:18-20**

21 Don't be afraid, O land; celebrate and be happy
because the LORD has done great things.
22 Don't be afraid, animals in the field,
because the pastures in the countryside have turned green.
The trees have borne their fruit;
the fig tree and vine have given their full yield.
23 So celebrate, people of Zion;
be happy in the LORD your God
because he's given you the autumn rains to vindicate you.
He has poured down rain for you,
the autumn and spring rains like before.
24 The threshing floor will be full of grain;
the vats will overflow with new wine and olive oil.

25 "Then I'll make up to you for the years
the swarming locusts, crawling locusts,
stripping locusts, and cutting locusts have eaten—
the enormous army I sent at you.

26 You'll have plenty to eat;
praise the LORD your God,

*who has dealt with you amazingly;
then you'll never be disgraced.*

²⁷That's how you'll know I'm in the land,
that I'm the LORD your God,
and there's no other.

Joel 2:21-27

The LORD Promises His Spirit

28 “After that, I’ll pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people:
sons and daughters will prophesy,
old men will dream dreams,
young men will see visions.

29 *I'll even pour out my Spirit
on male and female servants.*

30 *I'll display wonders in the sky and on the earth:
blood, fire, and columns of smoke.*

31 *The sun will turn dark, and the moon will turn red before that great, notable day of the LORD.”*

³²At that time, he'll save whoever calls on him.

On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem

people will escape like the LORD said;

among the survivors will be the people the LORD calls.

Joel 2:28-32

Judgment Against Enemy Nations

3:1 “When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,² I’ll gather the nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat and condemn them there on behalf of Israel, my permanent possession, my people. They scattered them among the nations, divided up my land,³ cast lots for my people, traded a boy for a prostitute, and sold a girl for wine to get drunk on.

⁴“What are you to me, Tyre, Sidon, Philistia? You think you’re going to pay me back? If you try, I’ll return it on your head swift and soon. ⁵You’ve stolen my silver and gold, taken my precious treasures into your temples, ⁶and sold Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks to remove them far away. ⁷So I’m going to raise them up from where you sold them and pay you back on your own head. ⁸I’ll sell your sons and daughters to Judah to sell to the Sabeans far away.

I, the LORD, have spoken.”

Joel 3:1-8

⁹Declare this among the nations:

*"Prepare for war; rouse the powerful;
let the fighting men advance and engage.*

10 *Beat your plowshares into swords,
your pruning hooks into spears;
have even the weak say, 'I'm a soldier now.'*

11 *Come quickly, nations everywhere;
gather there."*

LORD, bring out your soldiers!

12 *"Let the nations muster to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;
that's where I'll pronounce judgment on them all.* **Joel 3:9-12**

13 *Use the sickle; the harvest is ripe.
Come and tread; the winepress is full;
the vats are overflowing with those people's sinfulness."*

14 *Thousands upon thousands in the valley of decision!
The day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision!*

15 *The sun and moon will grow dark;
the stars will quit shining.*

16 *The LORD will roar out of Zion;
he'll thunder from Jerusalem.
Earth and sky will reverberate;
the LORD will be his people's refuge,
a strong fortress for the sons of Israel.*

17 *Then you'll know I'm the LORD your God,
who lives on Zion, my holy mountain.
So Jerusalem will be holy;
foreigners will never overrun it again.* **Joel 3:13-17**

Blessings for God's People

18 *"At that time, the mountains will drip with sweet wine;
the hills will flow with milk.
Water will run down the wadis in Judah;
a spring will gush out of the LORD's Temple
and water the Valley of Shittim.*

19 *Egypt will be a wasteland
and Edom a desert
because of their violence against Judah
and the murder of its innocent people.*

20But people will live in Judah forever,
in Jerusalem for all generations.

21I'll avenge their blood that I haven't already avenged
and make my home with them in Zion." **Joel 3:18-21**

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