

**This book is the account of Joel
foretelling about many nations
conquering the Israeli people
and about God restoring them.
We call this book
Joel**

¹ *I am Joel, the son of Pethuel. This is a message that Yahweh gave to me.*

The attack by locusts

² You leaders *of Israel*, and everyone else who lives in this country, listen *to this message!* Nothing [RHQ] like this has ever happened during the time that we have lived or the time when our ancestors lived.

³ Tell your children about it,
and tell your children to tell it to their children,
and tell your grandchildren to tell it to their children.

⁴ *I am talking about* the locusts that have eaten our crops.

The first swarm of locusts came and cut *many of the leaves of the crops;*
then another swarm came and ate *the rest of the leaves,*
then another swarm came hopping along,
and finally another swarm came
and they destroyed *everything else.*

- ⁵ You people who are drunk, wake up!
Wake up and wail loudly,
because all the grapes are ruined,
and so there will be no new wine [MTY]!
- ⁶ *Huge swarms of locusts* have entered our
country.
They are like [MET] a powerful army
that has very many soldiers,
with the result that no one can count them.
The locusts have teeth that are *as sharp as* the
teeth of lions [DOU]!
- ⁷ They have destroyed our grapevines and our fig
trees
by stripping off and eating all the bark,
with the result that the branches are white
and ◀bare/have no leaves on them▶.
- ⁸ Cry like [SIM] a young woman cries
when the young man to whom she was
◀engaged/promised to marry▶ has died.
- ⁹ There is no grain or wine for us to offer *as*
sacrifices at the temple,
so the priests who serve Yahweh are mourn-
ing/weeping.
- ¹⁰ *The crops in the fields* have been ruined;
it is as though [PRS] the ground is mourning.
The grain has been destroyed,
there are no *grapes to make* wine,
and there is no *more olive* oil.
- ¹¹ You farmers, grieve!
You who take care of grapevines, wail,
because the grain has been destroyed;
there is no wheat or barley growing.

12 The grapevines and the fig trees have withered,
and the pomegranate *trees* and palm *trees*
and apricot *trees* have also dried up.
The people are no longer joyful.

13 You priests, put on *rough* sack clothes and wail.
You who serve God *by offering sacrifices* on
the altar,
wear those rough sack clothes all night *to show
that you are mourning*,
because there is no grain or wine to be
offered at the temple of your God.

14 Tell the people that they should ◀fast/abstain
from eating food▶.
Tell the leaders and the other people to gather at
the temple
and to cry *out* to Yahweh *there*.

15 Terrible things are happening to us!
It will soon be the time when Yahweh, *who
is the Almighty God, will really punish us,
when he* will cause us to experience more
disasters.

16 Our crops are already gone,
and no *one* is rejoicing at all [DOU] at the
temple of our God.

17 *When we plant* seeds, *they do not grow*;
they dry up in the ground,
so there are no crops to harvest.
Our barns/storehouses are empty;
there is no grain *to store in them*.

- 18 Our cattle groan, searching for a pasture with some grass to eat,
and the sheep bleat because they are suffering.
- 19 Yahweh, I cry *out* to you,
because our pastures and our forests have dried up in the hot sunshine [MET].
- 20 *It is as though* even the wild animals cry *out* to you
because all the streams have dried up.
The rivers and streams are all dry,
and the grass in the pastures is all parched.

2

A warning about the locusts

- 1 Blow trumpets on Zion *Hill*,
God's sacred hill *in Jerusalem!*
Tell the people of Judah that they should tremble,
because it will soon be the time for Yahweh
to punish us further.
- 2 *That will be a very dark and gloomy day;*
there will be *black* clouds and it will be very dark.
A huge *swarm of locusts* has covered the mountains like [SIM] a *black cloud*.
Nothing like this has ever happened before,
and nothing like this will ever *happen* again.
- 3 *It is as though the locusts bring* flames of fire
from which no one can escape.
In front of them, the land was *beautiful* like [SIM]
the garden of Eden,
but behind them *the land is like* a desert

and nothing survives.

⁴ *The locusts* resemble horses,
and they run like [SIM] war horses.

⁵ Leaping over the mountaintops,
they make a noise like rumbling chariots,
like [SIM] a mighty army that is preparing for a
battle,
or like [SIM] the roar of a fire that burns up
stubble *in a field*.

⁶ When people see them coming,
they become very pale and frightened.

⁷ *The locusts* climb over walls like soldiers do;
they march along in columns
and never turn aside *from their columns*.

⁸ They rush straight ahead
without pushing each other.
Even though people throw spears and javelins at
them,
that will not cause them to stop.

⁹ They swarm over the city walls and enter our
houses;
they enter through our windows like [SIM]
thieves do.

¹⁰ *It is as though* they cause the earth to shake
and the sky to tremble.

The sun and the moon become dark
and the stars do not shine
because there are so many locusts in the sky.

¹¹ Yahweh leads this army *of countless locusts*,
and they obey his commands.

This time when he is judging and punishing us
 is very terrible,
with the result that it seems that no one
 [RHQ] can survive it.

Yahweh calls them to repent

¹² But Yahweh says,
 “In spite of *these disasters that you have experi-
 enced,*
 you can return to me with all your inner
 beings.
 Weep, and mourn, and ◀fast/abstain from eating
 food▶ *to show that you are sorry for having
 abandoned me.*

¹³ Do not tear your clothes
to show that you are sorry;
 instead, show [MET] that you are sorry.”

Yahweh is merciful and kind;
 he does not quickly become angry;
 he faithfully loves *people*.

He does not quickly become angry;
 instead, he greatly and faithfully loves *you,*
 and he does not like to punish you.

¹⁴ No one knows [RHQ] if he will change his mind
about punishing you
 and if instead he will act mercifully *toward
 you.*

If he does that, he will bless you
by giving you plenty of grain and wine
 in order that you can offer *some of* those
 things as sacrifices to him.

¹⁵ Blow the trumpets on *Zion Hill!*

Gather the people together!
Show by fasting that you are sorry *for the sins that you have committed*.

16 Perform the rituals to cause yourselves to be acceptable to Yahweh.

Gather everyone together—
the old people and the children, even the babies,
and summon brides and bridegrooms from their rooms.

17 Tell the priests who serve Yahweh to cry between the altar and the entrance to the temple
and to pray *this*:

“Yahweh, rescue/save *us* your people;
do not allow people from other nations to despise us;
do not allow them to ridicule us and say,
‘Why has [RHQ] their God *abandoned them?*’ ”

Yahweh promised to prosper them again

18 But Yahweh *showed that he* was concerned about his people
and that he would act mercifully toward them.

19 When the people prayed,
Yahweh answered and said,
“I will give you *plenty of* grain and wine and *olive oil*,
and you will be satisfied.
And I will no longer allow other nations to insult you.

20 Another army *of locusts will come* from the north *to attack you*,
 but I will force them to continue *past Jerusalem*
 into the desert.

Some will go into the Dead Sea in the east
 and some will go into the *Mediterranean Sea*
 in the west.

There they will all die, and their bodies will stink."

Yahweh does great things!

21 He does wonderful things!
 So even the ground should rejoice!

22 And the wild animals should not be afraid,
 because the meadows will soon become
 green again;

the fig trees and *other* trees will be full of fruit,
 and the grapevines will be covered with
 grapes.

23 You people of Jerusalem,
 rejoice about what Yahweh, your God, *will*
be doing for you.

He will send abundant rain at the ◀right time/
 time when it is needed▶—
 ◀in the spring/early in the year▶ and ◀in
 the autumn/late in the year▶
 like he did previously.

24 The ground where you thresh the grain will be
 covered with grain,
 and your vats where you store grape juice
 and *olive* oil will be full.

25 *Yahweh said*, “I will repay you for everything that was destroyed by those great swarms of locusts that I sent to attack you.

26 You, my people, will eat until your stomachs are full.

Then you will praise me [MTY], Yahweh, your God, for the wonderful things that I have done for you.

And never again will you be disgraced.

27 When that happens, you will know that I am *always* among you, and that I am Yahweh, your God, and that there is no other *God*.

Never again will you be disgraced.”

Yahweh promised to send his Spirit

28 “Some time later, I will give my Spirit to many [HYP] people.

Your sons and daughters will proclaim messages that come directly from me.

Your old men will have dreams *that come from me*,

and your young men will have visions *that come from me*.

29 At that time, I will give my Spirit even to servants, both men and women.

30 I will do unusual/amazing things on the earth and in the sky.

On the earth [CHI], there will be much blood *shed*

and *there will be very large* fires and smoke that resembles huge clouds.

- 31 *In the sky*, the sun will become dark and the moon will become *as red as* [MET] blood. *Those things will happen* before that great and terrible day when *I*, Yahweh, appear.
- 32 But at that time *I* will save everyone who worships me.
I promise that some people in Jerusalem [DOU] will escape *those disasters*; those whom I have chosen will survive.”

3

Yahweh will judge the nations

- ¹ *Yahweh says this*:
“At that time [DOU], I will enable *the people of* Jerusalem and *other places in* Judah to prosper again.
- ² *Then* in the Valley of Judgment I will gather together *the people of* all the *other* nations; I will judge *and punish* them
because they scattered my Israeli people and forced them to go to other countries.
They divided up my land
- ³ and they ◀threw marked stones/cast lots▶ to determine who would get *each of* my people.
Then they sold *some of* the Israeli boys and girls to get money to pay for prostitutes and wine to drink.
- ⁴ You *people of* [APO] Tyre and Sidon *cities* and you *people of* the Philistia *region*, I certainly have not [RHQ] done anything to harm you! So if you are trying to get revenge on me, I will very quickly get revenge on you.

⁵ You have taken the silver and gold and *other* valuable things from my temple and put them in your temples.

⁶ *You dragged away* the people of Jerusalem and *other places in* Judah, and you took them far away and sold them to people in Greece.

⁷ But I will cause my people to want to return from the places to which you sold them, and I will do to you what you did to them.

⁸ Then I will cause *some of* your sons and your daughters to be sold to the people of Judah! And *some of* them will be sold to the Sabea people-group, who live far away. *That will certainly happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.*"

God will judge and punish the nations

⁹ Proclaim to the *people of all* nations,

"Prepare for a war!

Summon your soldiers,

and tell them to stand in their battle positions.

¹⁰ *Take* your plows and make swords from them, and *take* your pruning knives and make spears from them.

Even the weak people must *also* be like [MET] strong soldiers.

¹¹ All you *people from the* nations that are near Judah

must come quickly and gather *in the Valley of Judgment.*"

But Yahweh, *when that happens*, send your army of angels to attack them!

12 The *people in* the nations near *Judah* must get ready and come to the Valley of Judgment. There Yahweh will sit and judge *and punish* them.

13 *They are like* [MET] crops that are ready to be harvested;
so *strike them like* [MET] a farmer swings his sickle to cut the grain.

They are like [MET] grapes that are piled high in the pits where they will be pressed;
because they are very wicked,
punish them severely [MET] now,
like [MET] a farmer tramples on the grapes until the pits are full of juice.

14 *There will be* huge crowds of people in that Valley of Judgment.
It will soon be the time that Yahweh *will punish them*.

15 *At that time* there will be no light from the sun or moon,
and the stars will not shine.

16 From Zion *Hill* in Jerusalem Yahweh will shout, and his voice will be like thunder,
and his voice will cause the sky and the earth to shake.

But Yahweh will protect [MET] his people;
he will be like [MET] a strong wall behind which the people of Israel will be protected.

God's blessings for his people

17 *Yahweh says*, "At that time, you Israeli people will know that I am Yahweh, your God.

I live on Zion, my sacred hill.
Jerusalem will be a sacred *city*,
and *soldiers from* other countries will never
conquer it again.

18 At that time, there will be vineyards covering
[MTY] the hills,
and *your cattle and goats on* those hills will
produce plenty of milk.

The streams in Judah will never dry up.
And a stream will flow from my temple into the
Acacia Valley northeast of the Dead Sea.

19 *The armies of* Egypt and Edom attacked the
people of Judah
and killed [MTY] many people who had not
done anything that was wrong.

So *now* those countries will become deserts,

20 but there will always be people living in
Jerusalem and *in other places* in Judea.

21 *I, Yahweh, live on Zion Hill in Jerusalem,*
and I will get revenge on the people *of Egypt*
and *Edom* who killed [MTY] *many of my*
people."

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