

Joel

Locusts Will Destroy the Crops

1 ¹Joel son of Pethuel received this message from the LORD:

2 Leaders, listen to this message!

Listen to me, all you people who live in the land.

Has anything like this ever happened in your life?

Did anything like this happen during your fathers' lifetime?

3 You will tell these things to your children, and your children will tell their children, and your grandchildren will tell the people of the next generation.

4 What the cutting locust^a has left, the swarming locust has eaten.

And what the swarming locust has left, the hopping locust has eaten.

And what the hopping locust has left, the destroying locust has eaten!

The Locusts—A Powerful Army

5 Drunks, wake up and cry!

All of you who drink wine, cry because your sweet wine is finished. You will not taste it again.

6 A powerful nation came to attack my land.

Its soldiers were too many to count.

Its weapons were as sharp as a lion's teeth and as powerful as a lion's jaw.

7 It destroyed my grapevine.

Its good vines withered and died.

It destroyed my fig tree, stripped off the bark and threw it away.

The People Cry

8 Cry like a young woman crying because the man she was ready to marry has died.

9 Priests, servants of the LORD, cry because there will be no more grain and drink offerings in the LORD's Temple.*

10 The fields are ruined.

Even the ground is crying because the grain is destroyed; the new wine is dried up, and the olive oil is gone.

11 Be sad, farmers!

Cry loudly for the grapes, for the wheat, and for the barley, because the harvest in the field is ruined.

12 The vines have become dry, and the fig tree is dying.

All the trees in the field—the pomegranate, the palm, and the apple—have withered.

And happiness among the people has died.

13 Priests, put on sackcloth* and cry loudly.

Servants of the altar,* cry loudly.

Servants of my God, you will sleep in sackcloth,

because there will be no more grain and drink offerings in God's Temple.

The Terrible Destruction of the Locusts

14Tell the people that there will be a special time of fasting. Call them together for a special meeting. Bring the leaders and everyone living in the land together at the Temple* of the LORD your God, and pray to the LORD.

15Be sad because the LORD's special day is near. At that time punishment will come like an attack from God All-Powerful. **16**Our food is gone. Joy and happiness are gone from the Temple of our God. **17**We planted seeds, but the seeds became dry and dead lying in the soil. Our plants are dry and dead. Our barns are empty and falling down.

18The animals are hungry and groaning. The herds of cattle wander around confused because they have no grass to eat. The sheep are dying.^b **19**LORD, I am calling to you for help. Fire has changed our green fields into a desert. Flames have burned all the trees in the field. **20**Wild animals also need your help. The streams are dry—there is no water! Fire has changed our green fields into a desert.

The Coming Day of the Lord

2 ¹Blow the trumpet on Zion.* Shout a warning on my holy mountain.

Let all the people who live in the land shake with fear.

The LORD's special day is coming; it is near.

2 It will be a dark, gloomy day.

It will be a dark and cloudy day.

^a**1:4** *locust* See "locust" in the Word List. Here, Joel might be talking about an enemy army.

^b**1:18** *dying* Literally, "being punished."

- At sunrise you will see the army spread
over the mountains.
It will be a great and powerful army.
There has never been anything like it
before,
and there will never be anything like it
again.
- 3 The army will destroy the land
like a burning fire.
In front of them the land will be
like the Garden of Eden.
Behind them the land will be
like an empty desert.
Nothing will escape them.
- 4 They look like horses.
They run like war horses.
- 5 Listen to them.
It is like the noise of chariots*
riding over the mountains.
It is like the noise of flames
burning the chaff.*
They are a powerful people,
who are ready for war.
- 6 Before this army, people shake with fear.
Their faces become pale from fear.
- 7 The soldiers run fast.
They climb over the walls.
Each soldier marches straight ahead.
They don't move from their path.
- 8 They don't trip each other.
Each soldier walks in his own path.
If one of the soldiers is hit and falls down,
the others keep right on marching.
- 9 They run to the city.
They quickly climb over the wall.
They climb into the houses.
They climb through the windows like
thieves.
- 10 Before them, earth and sky shake.
The sun and the moon become dark,
and the stars stop shining.
- 11 The LORD calls loudly to his army.
His camp is very large.
The army obeys his commands.
His army is very powerful.
The LORD's special day is a great and
terrible day.
No one can stop it.
- The Lord Tells the People to Change**
- 12 This is the LORD's message:
"Now come back to me with all your heart.
Cry and mourn,* and don't eat anything!
Show that you are sad for doing wrong.
- 13 Tear your hearts, not your clothes."^a
Come back to the LORD your God.
He is kind and merciful.
He does not become angry quickly.
He has great love.
Maybe he will change his mind

- about the bad punishment he planned.
- 14 Who knows, maybe he will change his
mind
and leave behind a blessing for you.
Then you can give grain and drink
offerings
to the LORD your God.

Pray to the Lord

- 15 Blow the trumpet at Zion.*
Call for a special meeting.
Call for a special time of fasting.
- 16 Bring the people together.
Call for a special meeting.
Bring together the old men,
the children, and the small babies still
at their mother's breasts.
Let the bride and her new husband
come from their bedroom.
- 17 Let the priests, the LORD's servants,
cry between the porch^b and the altar.*
All of them should say this:
"LORD, have mercy on your people.
Don't let your people be put to shame.
Don't let other people tell jokes about
your people.
Don't let the other nations laugh at us and
say,
"Where is their God?""

The Lord Will Restore the Land

- 18 Then the LORD cared very much about his
land.
He felt sorry for his people.
- 19 The LORD spoke to his people.
He said, "I will send you grain, wine, and
oil.
You will have plenty.
I will not shame you among the nations
anymore.
- 20 No, I will force the people from the
north^c to leave your land
and make them go into a dry, empty
land.
Some of them will go to the eastern sea
and some to the western sea.
They did such terrible things,
but they will be like a dead and rotting
body.
There will be such a terrible smell!"

The Land Will Be Made New Again

- 21 Land, don't be afraid.
Be happy and full of joy.
The LORD will do great things.
- 22 Animals of the field, don't be afraid.
The desert pastures will grow grass.
The trees will grow fruit.
The fig trees and the vines will grow
plenty of fruit.

^b2:17 porch An open area in front of the Temple.
^c2:20 north The Babylonian army came from this
direction to attack Judah. Armies from countries
north and east of Israel often came this way to
attack Judah and Israel.

^a2:13 Tear your hearts, not your clothes People tore
their clothes to show sadness. Here, God wants the
people to feel sad for the bad things they had done.

- 23 So be happy, people of Zion.*
Be joyful in the LORD your God.
He will be good and give you rain.
He will send you the early rains
and the late rains like before.
- 24 The threshing* floors will be filled with
wheat,
and the barrels will overflow with wine
and olive oil.
- 25^a“I, the LORD, sent my army against you.
The swarming locusts
and the hopping locusts
and the destroying locusts
and the cutting locusts^a ate everything
you had.
But I, the LORD, will pay you back
for those years of trouble.
- 26 Then you will have plenty to eat.
You will be full.
You will praise the name of the LORD your
God.
He has done wonderful things for you.
My people will never again be ashamed.
- 27 You will know that I am with Israel.
You will know that I am the LORD your
God.
There is no other God.
My people will never be ashamed again.”

God Will Give His Spirit to All People

- 28^a“After this, I will pour out my Spirit on all
kinds of people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will have dreams,
and your young men will see visions.*
- 29 In those days I will pour out my Spirit
even on servants, both men and
women.
- 30 I will work wonders* in the sky and on
the earth.
There will be blood, fire, and thick
smoke.
- 31 The sun will be changed into darkness,
and the moon will be as red as blood.
Then the great and fearful day of the LORD
will come!
- 32 And everyone who trusts in the LORD^b
will be saved.
There will be survivors on Mount Zion*
and in Jerusalem,
just as the LORD said.
Yes, those left alive will be the ones the
LORD has called.

Judah's Enemies Will Be Punished

3“Yes, at that time I will bring back the
people of Judah and Jerusalem from
captivity. ²I will also gather all the nations
together. I will bring all these nations down

^a2:25 *swarming locusts ... cutting locusts* See
Joel 1:4.

^b2:32 *who trusts in the Lord* Literally, “who calls on
the name of the LORD,” meaning to show faith in him
by worshipping him or praying to him for help.

into Jehoshaphat Valley.^c There I will judge
them. Those nations scattered my people,
Israel. They forced them to live in other
nations, so I will punish those nations. They
divided up my land. ³They threw lots* for my
people. They sold boys to buy a prostitute,
and they sold girls to buy wine to drink.

⁴“Tyre! Sidon! All of you areas of Philis-
tia! You are not important to me!^d Are you
punishing me for something I did? You might
think that you are punishing me, but I will
soon punish you. ⁵You took my silver and
gold. You took my precious treasures and put
them in your temples.^e

⁶“You sold the people of Judah and Jerusa-
lem to the Greeks. That way you could take
them far from their land. ⁷You sent my people
to that faraway place, but I will bring them
back. And I will punish you for what you did.
⁸I will sell your sons and daughters to the
people of Judah. Then they will sell them to
the faraway Sabceans.” This is what the LORD
said.

Prepare for War

- 9 Announce this among the nations:
Prepare for war!
Wake up the strong men!
Let all the men of war come near.
Let them come up!
- 10 Beat your plows into swords.
Make spears from your pruning hooks.^g
Let the weak man say,
“I am a strong soldier.”
- 11 All you nations, hurry!
Come together in that place.
LORD, bring your strong soldiers.
- 12 Wake up, nations!
Come to Jehoshaphat Valley.
There I will sit to judge
all the surrounding nations.
- 13 Bring the sickle,*
because the harvest is ripe.^h
Come, walk on the grapes,
because the winepress is full.
The barrels will be full and spilling over,
because their evil is great.
- 14 There are many, many people
in the Valley of Decision.ⁱ
The LORD's special day is near
in the Valley of Decision.

^c3:2 *Jehoshaphat Valley* This name means “The
LORD judges.”

^d3:4 *You are not important to me* Literally, “What
are you to me?”

^e3:5 *temples* Here, the temples were used to wor-
ship idols.

^f3:8 *Sabceans* A group of people from the Arabian
Desert.

^g3:10 *pruning hooks* These tools were used to
prune (cut) branches of trees. Read Isa. 2:4.

^h3:13 *harvest is ripe* This time of judgment is com-
pared to harvest time.

ⁱ3:14 *Valley of Decision* This is like the name
“Jehoshaphat Valley.”

- ¹⁵ The sun and the moon will become dark.
The stars will stop shining.
- ¹⁶ The LORD God will shout from Zion.*
He will shout from Jerusalem,
and the sky and the earth will shake.
But the LORD God will be a safe place
for his people.
He will be a place of safety
for the people of Israel.
- ¹⁷ Then you will know
that I am the LORD your God.
I live on Zion, my holy mountain.
Jerusalem will become holy.
Strangers will never pass through
that city again.

A New Life for Judah Promised

- ¹⁸ On that day, the mountains will drip
with sweet wine.
The hills will flow with milk,
and water will flow through all the

- empty rivers of Judah.
A fountain will come from the LORD's
Temple.*
It will give water to Acacia Valley.
- ¹⁹ Egypt will be empty.
Edom will be an empty wilderness,
because they were cruel to the people of
Judah.
They killed innocent people^a
in their country.
- ²⁰ But there will always be people
living in Judah.
People will live in Jerusalem
through many generations.
- ²¹ Those people killed my people,
so I really will punish them!^b
The LORD God will live in Zion*!

^a3:19 *killed innocent people* Literally, "shed innocent blood."

Amos

Introduction

1 ¹This is the message of Amos, one of the shepherds from the city Tekoa. He saw visions^a about Israel during the time that Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Joash was king of Israel. This was two years before the earthquake.

Punishment for Aram

² Amos said,
"The LORD will shout like a lion in Zion.*
His loud voice will roar from Jerusalem.
The green pastures of the shepherds will
turn brown and die.
Even Mount Carmel^b will become dry."

³This is what the LORD says: "I will definitely punish the people of Damascus for the many crimes they did.^c They crushed the people of Gilead^a with iron threshing^a tools.
⁴So I will start a fire at Hazael's^d house that will destroy the great palaces of Ben-Hadad.^e

^b1:2 *Mount Carmel* A mountain in northern Israel. The name means "God's vineyard." This shows that it was a very fertile hill.

^c1:3 *for the many crimes they did* Literally, "for three crimes ... and for four ..." This shows that these people were very sinful—and it was time to punish them. Also in verses 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6.

^d1:4 *Hazael* Hazael was the king of Aram (Syria). He murdered Ben-Hadad I so that he could become king. See 2 Kings 8:7.

^e1:4 *Ben-Hadad* Ben-Hadad II, the son of Hazael,

⁵I will also break open the gates of Damascus^f and remove the one who sits on the throne in the Valley of Aven.^g I will remove the symbol of power from Beth Eden,^h and the Arameans will be defeated and taken back to Kir.ⁱ This is what the LORD said.

Punishment for the Philistines

⁶This is what the LORD says: "I will definitely punish the people of Gaza^j for the many crimes they did. They took an entire nation of people and sent them as slaves to Edom.* ⁷So I will start a fire at the wall of Gaza that will destroy the high towers in Gaza. ⁸And I will destroy the one who sits on the throne in Ashdod. I will destroy the king who holds the scepter in Ashkelon. I will punish the people of Ekron.^k Then the Philistines who are still left alive will die." This is what the LORD God said.

king of Aram (Syria). See 2 Kings 13:3.

^f1:5 *Damascus* The capital city of Aram (Syria).

^g1:5 *the Valley of Aven* A name that can mean "Restful Valley" or "Empty Valley of Misfortune."

^h1:5 *Beth Eden* The royal city of Aram (Syria) on Mount Lebanon. This name means "House of Pleasure" or "Paradise."

ⁱ1:5 *Kir* Or "Kur," an area controlled by the Assyrians. See Amos 9:7.

^j1:6 *Gaza* An important city of the Philistines.

^k1:8 *Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron* Important cities of the Philistines.

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