



unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

v90

Joel

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Joel

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

2 You leaders **of Israel**, and
everyone else who lives in this
country, listen **to this message!**

Nothing like this has ever
happened during the time
that we have lived
or during 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 Tell them this:
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 hopping locusts came
and ate what they had left,
and finally, another swarm
came
and they destroyed
everything else.

5 You people who are drunk,
wake up and cry!
Cry loudly, all of you who
drink wine,
because all the grapes are
ruined,
and so there will be no new
wine!

6 Huge swarms of locusts have
entered our country.
They are like a powerful
army
that has very many soldiers;
no one can count them.

The locusts have teeth that are
as sharp as the teeth of lions!

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.

8 Cry and wail as a young
woman does
when the young man to
whom she was engaged has
died.

9 There is no more flour or
wine for us to offer as sacrifices
at Yahweh's temple,
so the priests who serve
Yahweh are mourning.

10 The locusts have ruined the
crops in the fields.

It is as though the ground
itself is mourning
because the grain is gone;
there will be no **grapes to**
make wine,
and there is no more **olive**
oil.

11 You farmers, despair!
You who take care of
grapevines, cry loudly,
because the crops in the field
are gone;
there is no wheat or barley
growing any more.

12 The grapevines and the fig
trees have withered,
and the pomegranate trees,
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 my God **by**
offering sacrifices on the
altar,

wear those sack clothes all night **to show that you are mourning**,

because there is no flour or wine to be offered at the temple of your God.

14 Set apart a day for when the people should go without food. Tell the leaders and the other people to gather at the temple and to cry out to Yahweh **there**.

15 It will soon be the time when Yahweh, **who is** the Almighty God, will punish us, when he will cause us to experience more disasters. That will be a terrible time!

16 Our crops are already gone, and no **one is** rejoicing at all 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 are empty; there is no grain **to store in them**.

18 Our cattle groan, searching for a pasture with some grass to eat but not finding any. The sheep also **bleat because they** are suffering.

19 Yahweh, I cry out to you, because **it is as though** a fire has completely burned our pastures and our forests.

20 The wild animals also are desperate for you to help them, because all the streams have dried up. The dryness is like a fire burning up the wilderness pastures.

2 ¹ Blow horns on Mount Zion,

God's sacred hill **in Jerusalem!**

Shout to the people of Judah that they should **be afraid and** tremble,

because it will soon be the time for Yahweh to punish us **further**.

2 That will be a very dark and gloomy day; A huge swarm of locusts forms a black cloud, making it very dark.

The swarm spreads over the mountains like the light of dawn;

they are like a mighty army. Nothing like this has ever happened before, and nothing like this will ever happen again.

3 **It is as though** the locusts set everything on fire wherever they go.

In front of them, the land was **as beautiful** as the garden of Eden,

but behind them **the land is like** a desert, and nothing is able to withstand them.

4 The locusts resemble horses and they run like war horses.

5 Leaping over the mountaintops, they make a noise like rumbling chariots, like a mighty army that is preparing for a battle, or like 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 run and climb over walls like soldiers do; each one continues on its way

and never turns aside from its course.

8 They rush straight ahead
without pushing each other.
People try to fight against them,
but that does not cause them
to stop.

9 They swarm over the city
walls and enter our houses;
they enter through our
windows as thieves do.

10 **It is as though** they cause
the earth to shake and the sky
to tremble as they come.
The sun and the moon become
dark,
and the stars do not shine

**because there are so many
locusts in the sky.**

11 Yahweh commands this
army **of countless locusts**,
and they obey him
powerfully.

This time during which Yahweh
is judging and punishing us is
very terrible,

**with the result that it seems
that no one can survive it.**

12 But Yahweh says,

“In spite of these disasters that
you have experienced,

you can still reconcile
yourselves to me in your
inner being.

Weep, and mourn, and fast **to
show that you are sorry that you
have abandoned me.**”

13 Do not tear **only** your
clothes

to show that you are sorry;
more importantly, show in
your inner being that you
are truly sorry
and **in that way** reconcile
yourselves to Yahweh your
God.

Do this because Yahweh is
merciful and kind;

he does not quickly become
angry;

instead, he greatly and
faithfully loves us,

and he does not like to
punish us.

14 It is possible that he will
change his mind about
punishing **you**

and, instead, act mercifully
toward you.

If he does that, he will bless you
by giving you plenty of grain
and wine

so that you can offer **some of**
those things for sacrifices to
our God, Yahweh.

15 Blow the **signal** horns on
Mount Zion!

Gather the people together!

Set apart time to fast, **to show
that you are sorry for your sins.**

16 Gather everyone together
and prepare them for a special
meeting for Yahweh.

Bring everyone—

the old people and the children,
even the babies;

yes, even summon
bridegrooms and brides from
their rooms.

17 Tell the priests who serve
Yahweh to cry all the way from
the entrance of the temple to
the altar

and to pray this:

“Yahweh, be merciful to us,
your people;

do not allow people from
other nations to despise us;

do not allow them to rule over
us and say among themselves,

“Their God has abandoned
them!”

18 Then Yahweh showed that
he cared deeply 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.

I will no longer allow other
nations to insult you.

20 When an army from the
north comes **to attack you**,
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 powerfully,
because they were powerful
in what they did.”

21 Do not be afraid, people, for
what might happen to the land.

You can rejoice, because
Yahweh will be powerful in
what he does! **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 do **for you**.

He will send rain to deliver you
at the right time—

before planting and before
harvesting,
as he did previously.

24 The ground where you
thresh the grain will be covered
with grain,

and your vats where you
store the fresh grape juice
and olive oil will be full.

25 Yahweh said, “I will repay
you for everything that those
great swarms of locusts
destroyed,

that enormous army that I
sent to attack you.

26 Then you will eat until your
stomachs are full.

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

and never again will I let others
shame you, my people.

27 When that happens, you will
know that I am **always** among
you,

that I am Yahweh, your God,
and that there is no other
God.

Never again will I let others
shame you.”

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

You 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
generously give my Spirit even
to servants, both men and
women.

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

On the earth, there will be
much bloodshed,

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** blood.

Those things will happen before that great and terrible day when I, Yahweh, come **to judge all people**.

32 And I will do this: I will save everyone who worships me.

As I have said before, ‘On Mount Zion in Jerusalem I will make a way for them to escape; those whom I have chosen will survive.’”

3 ¹ Yahweh says this:

“At that time, I will bring back the people whom their enemies took away from Jerusalem and from **other places in Judah**.

² Then in the Valley of Jehoshaphat I will gather together **the people of** all of the other nations;

there I will judge **and punish** them

because they scattered my Israelite people

and forced them to go to other countries,

and because they divided up my land **among themselves**.

³ **I will judge them** also because they played games of chance to determine who would get **each of** my people.

They traded **some of the** Israelite boys for prostitutes, and they sold **some of the** Israelite girls to get **money to buy** wine, and they drank it.

⁴ You people of the cities of Tyre and Sidon, and you people of Philistia—you have no reason to be angry with me. You are behaving as if you are trying to avenge yourselves on me for something. If that is what you are doing, I will very quickly do the same thing to you. ⁵ You took the silver and gold

and other valuable things from my temple and put them into your own temples. ⁶ You dragged away the people of Jerusalem and **other places in** Judah, and you took them far away from their homes and sold them to Greek traders.

⁷ But I will make it possible for my people 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 people to take **some of** your sons and your daughters and sell them to the people of Judah! And then they will sell **some of** them to the Sabeian people, who live far away. **That will certainly happen** because I, Yahweh, have said it.”

⁹ Proclaim to **the people of** all nations,

“Prepare for a war!

Summon your soldiers;

tell them to stand in their battle positions.

¹⁰ Take your plows and make swords from them;

take your pruning knives and make spears from them.

Even the weak **people** must **also** act like **they are** strong **soldiers**.

¹¹ All of **you people from** the nations that are near Judah must come quickly and gather there.”

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

¹² Yahweh says, “**The people in the** nations near Judah must get ready and come to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

There I will sit as a judge, and I will punish them.

¹³ **They are like** crops that are ready for farmers to harvest them;

so strike them as a farmer
swings his sickle to cut the
grain.

They are like large piles of
grapes in the pits where
farmers will press them;

so crush them as a farmer
tramples on the grapes.

Punish them severely because
they are very wicked.

If all of the wicked things
that they have done became
grape juice, they are so
wicked that the juice would
make the vats overflow."

14 There will be huge crowds
of people in that Valley of
Judgment.

It will soon be the time that
Yahweh will punish them in
that Valley of Judgment.

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

16 From Mount Zion in
Jerusalem, Yahweh will speak
forcefully;

his voice will be like thunder,
and his voice will cause the
sky and the earth to shake.

But Yahweh will protect his
people;

he will be like a strong wall
around the people of Israel.

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

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

18 At that time, there will be
vineyards bearing sweet grapes
on the mountains,

and your cattle and goats on
those hills will produce
plenty of milk.

The streams in Judah will
have abundant water,

and a stream will flow from my
temple into the Valley of
Shittim northeast of the Salt
Sea.

19 The armies of Egypt and
Edom attacked the people of
Judah

and killed many people there
who had not done anything
that was wrong.

As a result, those countries will
become wastelands, with no
one living there any longer.

20 But there will always be
people living throughout Judea
and in Jerusalem, forever. **21** I,
Yahweh, live on Mount Zion in
Jerusalem,

and I will not punish people
further for killing my people,
for which I previously
punished them."