



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."