

JOEL

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Joel chapter 2 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw Joel speak of a devastating locust infestation upon the Southern Kingdom of Judah and how this judgment was a type, a picture of the coming Day of the Lord. And as bad as that past locust judgment from God was it will pale in comparison to what is coming and we will see that as we get into our study this evening.

Now as some read this they think that God is being too hard upon His people, the Jews. But think about raising children and the things we do to protect them, help them to grow. You see, as parents we know that when our children are doing something that will harm them that we need to correct them. We love them so much that sometimes the correction is painful.

But if we can get their attention and have them turn from the action that will harm them then we have spared them from a greater pain, which may ultimately lead to death. God, as our loving Father, responds the same way with us. He keeps trying to get our attention and keeps trying to keep us out of a path that will only cause us harm.

Now, coming back to Joel we can see how far the people had turned from God and started worshiping idols. God held all accountable for their actions, from the priests in the Temple to the drunk out on the street. God wanted all to hear that this locust infestation was a judgment from Him.

The locusts that had blocked out the sun and made the land dark also made the land barren, which speaks of their spiritual condition. They were walking in darkness, not serving the Lord whom they said they were going to serve. And their spiritual lives were barren, there was no fruit being born in their lives. And keep in mind that we are dealing with the Southern Kingdom of Judah here and the judgment that would come upon them ultimately by the hands of the Babylonians and then a future time, during the Tribulation Period!

Remember that we are looking not at the past but the future, even in our day to the Day of the Lord and the focus is on Israel, the Jewish people. Also keep in mind the time-frame that Joel was prophesying during. Joel was prophesying during the time of the godly King in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, the reign of Joash.

That is where we will pick-up our study this evening in Joel chapter 2 beginning in verse 1 as we will see the alarm for war is sounding, the people are being alerted of the coming judgment. So let's see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

JOEL 2

VERSE 1-5

1. Back in Joel chapter 1 the focus was the locust judgment and drought that came upon the land for their rebellion against God. But here in chapter 2 the focus is not the past or even the present but a future day, the *Day of the Lord!*

And we know that this is not good because Joel says that they are to sound the alarm, prepare the people for the coming invasion, get ready for battle! And this tremendous judgment will be far worse than this locust judgment that had come upon them already.

Yes, this judgment of God, this Day of the Lord will be for all the inhabitants of the earth, the earth dwellers, both Jews and Gentiles. But specifically here the focus is upon the Jewish people.

You see, this alarm is being sounded **“in My holy mountain!”** In other words, it is speaking of Jerusalem and specifically Mount Moriah or the Temple Mount area, the place where God dwelt between the Cherubim above the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies!

And we have seen that in our studies of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament that God will deal with His people in the last days. You see, this period of time known as the Day of the Lord is like a refining process that the Jewish people will go through and as they go through this time they will return to the Lord. They will call upon Jesus to be Lord and Savior of their lives, they will come to their Messiah!

Previously it was the locusts that darkened the sky, but this time it won't be these locusts that darken the sky but a massive army that gathers together for that final battle called Armageddon. Amos expounds on this day when he says, **“Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him! Or as though he went into the house, leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him! Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?”** Amos 5:18-20.

God wants us to understand that this is no game. His judgments are real. You may escape from one but the next one is worse. When you are in the safety of your home, think again. There is no place to rest or hide from His judgment.

Why is God doing this? To break you of your self-will and get you to look up, get you to come to Him and repent of your sins and receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior. It is what He will do with the Jewish people and it is what He is doing with Gentiles today!

2. Now as you read of this devastating invasion upon the land of Israel it is compared to what the locusts do as they come through an area. You see, looking at the locust judgment, before these insects entered the land it was beautiful. In fact Joel compares it to the Garden of Eden. But this lush land quickly becomes a wilderness as they eat all the plant life that is in sight. The land that once was able to support life abundantly has now become a wasteland and is unfit for habitation.

Now there will be hunger, starvation and death in the land that once brought a bountiful harvest. And we will see this on a more intense scale during the Tribulation Period as God pours out His wrath on a Christ rejecting world. God's instruments of judgment will accomplish the task that is before them.

3. Regarding this Day of the Lord, listen to what Zephaniah tells us, **“The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers. I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD; their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like refuse. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy, for He will make speedy riddance of all those who dwell in the land.”** Zephaniah 1:14-18.

Did you notice who this judgment is against? It is against those who have sinned against God. They have become blind to what they are doing, they don’t see this destruction from the hand of God. And there will be no amount of money that will be able to spare them from this judgment.

People may mock this judgment of God that is coming upon a Christ rejecting world, they may laugh and think it is a big joke until the judgment begins and then the joke is over. They mocked and laughed at Noah when he was building the ark that God had commanded him to build. And that laughing and mocking ended quickly when that first rain drop fell!

May we as Christians not lose our love and compassion for the lost, they are spiritually blinded to the truth and thus, may we pray that their eyes are opened up and they see Jesus!

4. Listen again to verses 4 and 5 of Joel chapter 2 because we are going to get some very interesting descriptions of these locusts, both past and future. And as we read on we will not only see the past infestation of these locusts but we will see how they just overcame the land and there was no way to stop them. And that is just a picture of the devastating judgment that is to come!

Here is what Joel said, **“Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; And like swift steeds, so they run. With a noise like chariots Over mountaintops they leap, Like the noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble, Like a strong people set in battle array.”**

Joel 2:4-5.

These locusts have heads that appear like horses and move rapidly and swiftly towards their destination as horses do. They are already fit for battle, with razor sharp teeth that can eat plants down to the roots, even destroying the root system at times. Let’s continue reading on and we then will look at the future fulfillment of this judgment.

VERSES 6-9

1. First of all as you are reading this think of a locust infestation with these millions and millions of locusts flying through the air, climbing through your windows, getting into your house, your food, into everything!

And there is no end of these locusts in sight and I don’t know about you, but it would drain my face of color! Not only are these people filled with terror, but these locusts are causing pain upon them. Imagine millions of these locusts slamming into your body as you go out searching for food. It would be like someone throwing millions of stones at you. So you try to

take refuge in your house, but to no avail, as I have said, they are climbing through your windows, on your walls, throughout your house!

Now in saying that, as Joel has spoken of this locust judgment in the previous chapter you would think he would now admonish the people to turn back to the Lord, to repent of their sin but instead he is basically telling them, “If you thought that was bad, you ain’t seen nothing yet! If you don’t turn back to God it will get worse, a lot worse!” and it will!

2. I think Joel’s writings compare very closely to what John has to say in Revelation chapter 9 regarding these demonic locust-like creatures that are released from the abyss to inflict pain upon man as a scorpion sting would do. And for 5 months this will continue on, people wanting to die but death takes a holiday for those 5 months!

Listen to what John has to say regarding the sounding of the fifth trumpet and the first woe in Revelation 9:1-12, **“Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like**

gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things."

I am so glad we are not going to be around for that judgment of God. Can you imagine the pain and as bad as the locust judgment was in Joel's day this is far worse!

Let's look at the events that take place here in Revelation chapter 9 because, like I have said, I believe this is what Joel is speaking of as well. First of all we see that as the fifth angel sounds his trumpet we see a star that has fallen from heaven come crashing to the earth. Understand that this is not space debris, for the personal pronoun "**he**" is used. Also, this event has already occurred, it has already taken place for John tells us the star had "**fallen**" from heaven, past tense and so a past event.

I believe that this is Lucifer or Satan and yes he has fallen as pride brought him down. Isaiah 14:12-14 tells us, "**How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer (Day star), son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'**"

When pride filled Lucifer's heart he rebelled against God trying to make himself out to be god. And understand this, Lucifer was the anointed cherub, the number one angelic being, he was the praise and worship leader in heaven and he was beautiful, perfect in his creation. But that was not enough for him, he wanted it all, and he fell fast and he fell hard. In fact, Jesus, in speaking of this event, said "... 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.'" Luke 10:18.

But I think this is speaking of the events of Revelation chapter 12 as a war breaks out in Heaven and Lucifer is cast to the earth. And so we see that Satan or Lucifer was given the key to the bottomless pit. And notice that whoever this army is that is locked in this pit, Satan does not have the authority or the ability to release them until God gives him the key and allows him to unleash them from this prison. Satan is subject to God's sovereign rule!

So as he opens this bottomless pit we see this smoke come pouring out. Remember that this pit has been closed for thousands of years and now that it is opened, the musty, foul smoke arises out of it and then out of that smoke we see these demonic locust-like creatures come forth.

Now what is the bottomless pit all about and where is it? Well, if it is a bottomless pit the only place it could be is the center of the earth. You see, you can only go up from the center of the earth, there is no bottom and thus, it is bottomless!

I believe that these demonic creatures were placed there because, as Jude tells us, they went after "strange flesh" or these fallen angels violated the laws of God by not carefully guarding and maintaining their original position in which they were created for. Instead they transgressed the laws of God and invaded territory that was foreign to them and forbidden to them, namely the human race.

And Jude compares what these angels did to what the men of Sodom did. You see, **“Strange”** in the Greek is the word HETEROS, which means “different flesh.” That is to say that the men of Sodom and Gomorrah went after other men, they were having homosexual relationships, and thus it went against that which was natural. These angels had that same sexual problem, not homosexuality, but going after something that God did not intend them to go after. These angels transgressed the limits of their own nature and invaded the realm of another nature. These angels co-habituated with women and brought forth offspring.

Another example of this can be found in II Peter 2:4, which says **“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.”** Peter’s point is this, if God did not spare these angels who sinned, He surely will not spare man who was created slightly lower than angels if they are involved in sin.

Dr. Wuest translates this verse from the Greek like this, *“For, in view of the fact that God did not spare angels who sinned, but having thrust them down into Tartarus, committed them to pits of the neither-world gloom, being reserved for judgment.”*

You see, Satan tried to contaminate the earth so that Jesus could not be born of the seed of the woman. This was done as angles co-habituated with women. In Genesis chapter 6 we are told **“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose...There were giants (Nephilim, fallen ones) on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons”**

of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.” Genesis 6:1-2, 4.

Now some like to say that the godly line of Seth, being **“the sons of God”** married the ungodly line of Cain, being the **“daughters of men.”** But the union of a believer and unbeliever does not produce some kind of mutation or strange manifestation - giants or Nephilim! The classical use in the Old Testament of the phrase **“sons of God”** or BAR ELOHEM is that of angels. We clearly see that in Job 1:6 and Job 38:7.

And so those fallen angels or demons that are locked in chains down in Tartarus or the center of the earth are those wickedest of angels who co-habitated with women and others who the Lord feels should be placed there.

The other interesting point is that Jude and Peter tell us that these angels are locked up for the Day of Judgment. I think many falsely assume that it is God’s judgment upon them as they are cast into outer darkness for eternity. Yes that is coming but I believe this is referring to God’s judgment being poured out and He will use these demonic forces to unleash His judgment upon this world. In Jude 6 we are told, **“ . . . He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”** Jude 6.

As you read this you will notice right away that this is not your garden variety locust. These locusts do not eat the vegetation like normal locusts would. But they are sent to harm men who are not sealed by God.

These demonic locusts can’t kill, but their scorpion-like stings will make people want to die. I have heard that a scorpion sting causes excruciating pain throughout the body. And these demonic locusts will ravage the land for 5 months, which is interesting because the natural life-span of a locust is 5 months, even though these demonic locusts are very unnatural ones!

Imagine the pain, men wanting to die and yet death takes a holiday for 5 months! What a horrible period of time. Imagine these demonic locusts that keep attacking and inflicting their pain, men can only suffer through it, hoping to die, and yet they won't be able to for 5 months!

As you look at Revelation 9:7-10 you see in these verses a description of these locusts and we see the word "like" used some 8 times. You see, John is making a comparison and is not saying that they are horses with crowns on their heads with faces like men or even locusts like we would think. It is only a comparison as John sees these demonic creatures arise out of the abyss.

Now yes, locusts invade like an army whose numbers don't seem to end. They just keep coming and coming. In fact skies have been darkened as they swarm overhead, moving to their next feeding ground. And they would devour everything in sight even down to the roots of the plant, and then move on. Their teeth were like a lions teeth with a saw-tooth pattern, again, enabling them to eat right down to the roots. In fact, stories have been told that at night, during these infestations, you can hear them chewing on the vegetation. Also, their bodies are solid, covered with armor for protection. And as they fly, the noise they make can be deafening.

Now in verse 11 of Revelation 9 we are told that there is a king over these demonic locusts. A leader who not only will release them from the pit but who will guide them in their attacks. A leader in whom they will serve.

His name, in any language, is destruction! In Hebrew it is *ABADDON*, which means destruction. In the Greek it is *APOLLYON*, which means destroyer. Who is this king that causes so much destruction in the lives of men? John 10:10 tells us that Satan, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. . ." Thus, their leader is none other than Satan.

Obviously as we read these verses here in Revelation and in Joel we can clearly see that this is not a normal locust infestation. And to prove that point further, God places a golden nugget of information in the book of Proverbs. In Proverbs 30:27 we are told, “**The locusts have no king, yet they all advance in ranks.**”

God is telling us that normal locust infestations have no king over them even though they move in tight military-like units. But this locust infestation here in Revelation is far from normal. In fact, we are told that Satan himself is given the key to the bottomless pit to let these creatures out to cause pain upon the people of this earth who have not been sealed by God, and it is Satan who is leading them. And that is what Joel is also telling us!

Now *HISTORICALLY* speaking the prophecy of Joel was fulfilled in Joel’s day as the land was besieged with these locusts. *SYMBOLICALLY* it was fulfilled as the Southern Kingdom of Judah was carried away into captivity by the Babylonians in 586 B. C. And *PROPHETICALLY* these locusts speak of the demons which will arise from the abyss as Revelation 9 tells us.

VERSES 10-11

1. As you read this you may feel overwhelmed by this invading army. Maybe Joel felt those who read this or heard of this would be overwhelmed by it. Make no mistake about it, this army is not the power but God is and He will use this army to bring about His judgment upon not only the Jewish people but also upon Gentiles.

In Jeremiah 25:8-9 we are told of the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar and listen carefully to how God identifies him. We are told, **“Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Because you have not heard My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,’ says the LORD, ‘and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations.’”**

God calls this pagan king His servant. Why? Because he is carrying out His judgment against the Southern Kingdom of Judah. And I think that is what is implied here in Joel, that this army is being used by the Lord to carry out His judgment.

And notice how verse 11 ends, **“For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; Who can endure it?”** That is a great question and if Joel ended there I don’t think there would be much hope for the people. But he does not end there, he is going to show us **“Who can endure it?”** And the answer to that is very simple. Only those who have come to know the Lord for outside of Christ you will only see His wrath! Let’s read on and see how Joel is calling for them to repent and return to the Lord!

VERSES 12-17

1. They heard about the judgment that was coming upon them for their sin but the Lord does not leave them in that hopeless condition. He calls for them to turn back to Him! The word **“turn”** implies action, a moving in the opposite direction.

This is not just a bunch of head knowledge that causes us to think a certain way but does nothing about our actions. This is a change in our heart, an obedience to God who has created us. And as we turn to Him we realize how far we have fallen, which then causes us to weep and mourn to our God that He might save us from the judgment that is to come. There is a change in our actions that is a result of a change in our heart.

But if the people refuse to listen and turn to God then God will deal with them accordingly. Keep in mind that as God does judge them He is being fair and righteous in His judgment.

Listen to what God says through the prophet Zechariah regarding this matter beginning in verse 11 of Zechariah chapter 7. We read, **“But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.”**

Zechariah 7:11-12. They refused to turn to the Lord, closed their ears to what He was saying and you can do that if you want but you will be held accountable for your refusal to turn to the Lord.

2. Now for the Jew, they would tear their clothes as a sign of mourning or being sorrowful for their actions. And we see here that God is telling them not to tear their clothes because that is all outward, it is all for show. God wants them to tear open their heart, let the conviction of God expose their sin so that they might repent and the Lord might relent from His judgment.

The grace and mercy of God is so deep and it is so rich. Peter tells us, **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”** II Peter 3:9.

David Guzik wrote this about a repentance that is all show and no action or that their heart is really not broken over their sin.

Spurgeon tells the story of a woman who came seeming to be in great sorrow, saying what a great sinner she was, but Spurgeon suspected her repentance wasn't sincere. He said, "Well, if you are a sinner of course you have broken God's laws. Let's read the Ten Commandments and see which ones you have broken."

They started at the first: "You shall have no other gods before Me," and Spurgeon asked her if she ever broke that commandment. "Oh no," she said, "not that I know of." "You shall not make any graven image' - did you ever break that one?" "Never, sir," she answered.

As you might suppose, Spurgeon went through all Ten Commandments and she could not find a single one that she had broken, and what he suspected was true. She didn't really consider herself a sinner, and she was making a show of repentance because she thought it was expected of her.

- David Guzik, Joel 2

3. And notice starting in verse 15 of Joel chapter 2 as we see Joel now call the people to assemble before the Lord and fast. How does he gather the people to assemble together? They were to blow the Shophar. The first blow of the Shophar was to be prepared for battle, to awaken the people for war. But now the call is for a national time of repentance and seeking God before the battle comes. And the reason is that the Lord may relent from pouring out His judgment upon them. The normal joyful activities must be put aside now and all the nation must mourn before the Lord so that they may be spared from this judgment.

This involves all, no one would be exempted from this time of fasting and prayer. From the elders to the children even to the nursing babies. The bride and the bridegroom were also to gather. And the priests were to gather in the inner court of the Temple while the rest of the people gathered in the outer court of the Temple. The priests were to represent the people before God, to intercede before God for the people.

And if they refused and judgment came, the other nations who once saw the power of God would now say “**Where is their God?**” Their actions would bring the Lord down in the eyes of the other nations! May we also remember that truth as people look at us and come to their conclusions about the God we serve and love based upon what we do and what we say.

VERSES 18-20

1. We are told that this is God’s land, He owns it and has given it to the Jewish people. And of this land God says in Deuteronomy 11:10-12, “**For the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden; but the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the LORD your God cares; the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.**”

God’s eyes are watching over this land on a continual basis. And the reason I believe this is because of the promise He made to Abraham and his descendants, that one day the Messiah would rule and reign from Jerusalem and the Jews will inhabit all the land that God has promised them in safety. God will not go back on His promise!

2. Yes, these locusts that came upon the land in judgment were destroyed, that is the present day fulfillment. And yes God did deliver them from the hands of the Assyrians because of their repentance before Him. But judgment did come by the hands of the Babylonians some hundred years down the road because they did not repent of their sin and return to the Lord.

And ultimately, in the Tribulation Period the Antichrist will come down upon the Jewish people and the land of Israel to destroy her and as they repent and return to the Lord the Lord will deliver them from this attack!

3. Now maybe some of you are thinking, “Hey, how does this even apply to me today?” Make no mistake about it and don’t lose sight of the fact that God will also help us to drive out the enemies in our life, whatever they may be. If it is lust, greed, laziness, substance abuse, whatever, give it to the Lord. Trying to win these battles in the flesh will only lead to frustration and casualties, seek the Lord for these spiritual battles we are fighting! Lay your life before Him, rend your heart and not your garments and see the salvation that God will bring to the situation you are in!

VERSES 21-27

1. As we look at the drought out west and the fires that are breaking out over this area, we see how important rain is. And the same is true in Israel. The former rain came in October or November. This rain was vital for the land. It was a soaking rain that was needed before the plowing or sowing were done. Without it the land could not be prepared for the planting of the seeds.

The latter rains came in March or April and were much lighter than the former rains or the autumn rains. But this spring rain was also vital for the development of the crops. This sprinkle would be refreshing to the crops, keeping their roots moist and well nourished.

It is like David said in Psalm 65:9-10, **“You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide their grain, for so You have prepared it. You water its ridges abundantly, you settle its furrows; you make it soft with showers, you bless its growth.”**

Look at how we can apply this to our own lives. You see, we as Christian need the refreshing waters, the soaking waters of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is vital for us and if you are lacking that power ask the Holy Spirit to have more of you, that you may be filled to overflowing.

Paul, in Ephesians 5:18 said **“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.”** In the Greek it is, *“be constantly being filled with the Spirit.”* Not just a sip or a drip but a pouring out of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the result of that is seen in the next few verses, which says, **“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”** Ephesians 5:19-21.

You see, God has brought those soaking rains into our lives to soften our hearts and prepare us to receive His truth, to come to saving faith. And the softer rains come to help us to grow and be nourished so that we can be fruitful.

What is the result of rain being poured out upon the land? It will produce fruit. Then what is the result of the Holy Spirit being poured out into our lives? Fruit will be produced in our lives. And not just a little, an abundant crop, the threshing floors will be full, the vats will be full of wine and oil. And God wants to do no less in our own lives!

2. Looking back over your life how many of you feel that you have wasted some of that? I am sure we all feel that way but here is the wonderful thing about our Lord, He has a way of restoring those wasted years if we turn to Him!

Listen again to what he said in the first part of verse 25, “**So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten . . .**” In other words, God is going to restore what the locust have taken away.

Spiritually speaking, sin will always have a destructive affect upon your life. It destroys, eats away at your life if you allow it until it finally consumes you! And yet God is promising to restore those wasted years - isn't He good!

What do you need to do to regain those lost years? Seek the Lord! You see, for something to be restored to you that you lost you must first want it back. Ask God to restore those years that were wasted, those years the locust have eaten and to make them fruitful for His glory! What an awesome God we serve!

Spurgeon put it like this, “It will strike you at once that the locusts did not eat the years: the locusts ate the fruits of the years’ labor, the harvests of the fields; so that the meaning of the restoration of the years must be the restoration of those fruits and of those harvests which the locusts consumed. You cannot have back your time; but there is a strange and wonderful way in which God can give back to you the wasted blessings, the unripened fruits of years over which you mourned. The fruits of wasted years may yet be yours.” How gracious is our God!

3. As you turn back to the Lord you will find satisfaction and isn’t that what it is all about, being satisfied in the Lord! And when you are satisfied in the Lord, resting in Him, what will come flowing from your life is praise unto God. It is when we take our eyes off God and look for satisfaction in other things that we will never find it and thus, we are running to and for looking for that satisfaction that seems to elude us! But we will keep looking and looking apart from the Lord!

And what happens as we turn from the Lord is that the praise we had towards God is replaced with complaining about all that you don’t have, how unfair life is, and-so-on. Get refocused on the Lord and you will find true satisfaction in Him.

VERSES 28-32

1. Here we see the outpouring of God’s Spirit upon “**all flesh**” and we are given a timeframe for this, “**And it shall come to pass afterward . . .**” After what is this going to happen? I believe it is speaking of the last days and as we will see, Peter is going to pick up on what Joel has written and tell us that on the day of Pentecost this prophecy began to be fulfilled. We will deal more with that in a minute.

First of all we see in the Old Testament the Holy Spirit coming upon certain individuals to empower them for a work. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came upon men like Moses, Joshua, Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Samuel, Saul, David and-so-on. But for the most part it was rare to see. But as we come into the New Testament that which was rare was going to be common!

We see this spoken of in Acts chapter 2 as the day of Pentecost arrives. Remember as the believers were gathered together in the upper room that the Holy Spirit comes upon them and they are empowered by the Holy Spirit as they have a supernatural power to be witnesses of Christ.

Now this is not speaking of their salvation when the Holy Spirit comes in a person, for we see this occur in John 20:22 where we read “**And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’**”

This is a different event here in Acts chapter 2, where the Holy Spirit comes upon them. In fact, Jesus said in Luke 24:49, after He breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit, “**Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.**” They were to wait for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit upon their lives.

And the reason we know that this event here on Pentecost is related to what Joel was saying here in chapter 2 is that Peter links these events together! It is the beginning of the fulfillment of this prophecy.

And Peter gives us a little more information, he tells us that this will occur in the “**last days.**” When did they begin? Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us “**God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.**”

So the last days begin with God entering the time domain and becoming flesh. Peter picks up on this when he says “**He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.**” I Peter 1:20.

And as John puts it, we are living in the last days! He says “**Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.**” I John 2:18.

Like I have said, this is a partial fulfillment of what Joel had said. God has poured out His Spirit, but not on all flesh at this point. He has poured out His Spirit upon the church, His bride. We are not only indwelt by His Spirit but the Holy Spirit has come upon us to empower us for the work He has called us to do. But one day, I tend to lean towards this occurring in the Millennial Kingdom, God’s Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh just as Joel spoke of.

2. Yes this outpouring of God’s Spirit began at Pentecost but now Joel takes us all the way into the future, to the Tribulation Period. You see, Joel tells us that cataclysmic cosmic events will take place in the last days, which I believe is speaking of the Tribulation Period.

In Revelation chapter 6, beginning in verse 12, we see an interesting comparison to what Joel has said. We read **“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’”**

Revelation 6:12-17.

Prior to the Lord returning to set-up His Kingdom all these cataclysmic events will occur upon the earth, besides the many other things that the book of Revelation speaks of as well as other books in the Bible.

3. Now you read of these devastating things that will happen during the Tribulation Period many miss the point. They see this as God just pouring out His wrath, destroying everything, but that is not what God is doing. In fact, Joel 2:32 shows us what this is all about, **“And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. . . .”**

God is calling people today and He will continue to do so during the Tribulation Period because He desires them to come to saving faith. I realize that some believe that God has only predestined some to be saved and the rest He has predestined to Hell. That is so wrong and it makes God look like it is His fault that someone went to Hell.

But I think the Scriptures are very clear that all have a choice to make. How do I know that? Because it says, “**. . . whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. . .**” You are part of that “**whoever**” group of people that includes every person on this earth, they have a choice to make!

The tragedy is that even in the Tribulation Period many will reject Jesus. Remember what we read in Revelation 6:15-17, and this is so sad but we are told, “**And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’**”

You see, salvation has not changed, you must receive that free gift of life that is only found in Christ. Yes, salvation will be in Mount Zion during the Kingdom Age because that is where the Lord will be as He establishes His Kingdom here on the earth.

Let me close this evening with these words from Paul in Ephesians chapter 2 beginning in verse 1 where we read, **“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”** Ephesians 2:1-10.

Only God can take these dead spiritual bodies and make them alive again in Christ. If we refuse we are like zombies meandering through life with no direction, being blown by the winds of false doctrine in every direction. The choice is yours! Alive in Christ or dead in sin! But to all who call upon Him, He will receive.