

Yo'el (Joel) - Part 3

Promise of Blessing

This section starts with the word **'Then'**; the implication is that the people of **Y'hudah** would repent and would do so wholeheartedly. If they refused to return to the **Lord**, none of these benefits would be granted to them. These blessings would arrive in answer to the changed hearts of the people and the fervent prayer of the priests (2:17).

18 Then Adonai will become jealous for his land and have pity on his people. 19 Here is how Adonai will answer his people: "I will send you grain, wine, and olive oil, enough to satisfy you; and no longer will I make you a mockery among the Goyim. 20 No, I will take the northerner away, far away from you, and drive him to a land that is waste and barren; with his vanguard toward the eastern sea and his rearguard toward the western sea, his stench and his rottenness will rise, because he has done great things."

The people of **Yerushalayim** might hear of wars and rumors of wars, but they did not need to be alarmed (see Matt. 24:6) because the **Lord** would take action on their behalf. He would drive their enemies (the northern army) far from them. The primary meaning was still the plague of locusts. Even though those insects would usually have come from the south, it was not unheard of for them to arrive from a northerly direction. **Y'hudah** was now given the assurance that **God** would deal with this insect-horde and drive it into the desert regions, where, because there would be no vegetation for it to feed upon, it would wither and die. He would divide their teeming mob so that half of it ended up in the sulfur-ridden **Dead Sea**, where nothing can live, and the other half into the swirling waters of the **Mediterranean Sea**. The dead bodies of this locust swarm would heap up in foul piles that would putrefy and cause a great stench to fill the air, just as happened with the bloated corpses of the **Egyptian** army lying dead on the seashore (Exodus 14:28–30).

21 Don't fear, O soil; be glad! Rejoice! for Adonai has done great things. 22 Don't be afraid, wild animals; for the desert pastures are green, the trees are putting out their fruit, the fig tree and vine are giving full yield. 23 Be glad, people of Tziyon! Rejoice in Adonai your God! For He is giving you the right amount of rain in the fall, He makes the rain come down for you; the fall and spring rains - this is what He does first. 24 Then the floors will be full of grain, and the vats overflow with wine and olive oil.

Y'hudah was to be afraid no longer. Previously they had been called upon to weep (1:5), mourn (1:8) and put on sackcloth (1:13). Still, once they repented, even the land itself was to rejoice (2:21). The animals were to be unafraid (v. 22). The people were to be glad (v. 23). Their sorrow would be turned to joy (see John 16:20). They would not have deserved these blessings. Still, the **Lord** would shower His love upon them, solely because of His grace and goodness.

25 "I will restore to you the years that the locusts ate, the grasshoppers, shearer-worms and cutter-worms, my great army that I sent against you.

Everything would improve. In **Yo'el** 2:25, **God** promised to restore the lost years caused by the locust invasion. Now, He assured the people of **Y'hudah** of even greater blessings.

26 You will eat until you are satisfied and will praise the name of Adonai your God, who has done with you such wonders. Then my people will never again be shamed. 27 You will know that I am with Isra'el and that I am Adonai your God, and that there is no other. Then my people will never again be shamed.

The **Lord** then promised to do something even more incredible. The people would not merely return to the situation they were in before the locusts arrived; incredibly, all the 'fruit' that they had lost during those years of devastation would be restored to them. An abundance of bumper crops would restore those wasted years of harvest. They might have thought about those awful days (recorded in 1:4) and the bitterness left to them through the destruction caused by the various-sized locusts, but all their losses would be paid back.

Promise of God's Spirit

Everything would improve. In **Yo'el** 2:25, **God** had promised to restore the lost years caused by the locust invasion. Now he assured the people of **Y'hudah** of even greater blessings. These greater blessings were things that would happen '**after**' (v. 28). The '**before**' was full of disaster and the loss of essentials for life. Still, the gloom and despair of those days were going to give way - first to material blessings and then, afterwards, to an abundance of spiritual grace. These would be amazing wonders that could not have been envisaged while the people were in their trials.

3^{1(2:28)} "After this, I will pour out my Spirit on all humanity. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions; ^{2(2:29)} and also on male and female slaves in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

When **Moshe** was feeling very discouraged because the work of leading the people was getting too onerous for him, he was advised to appoint seventy elders to help him. The **Lord** promised to take the **Spirit** that was in **Moshe** (i.e. **God's Spirit**) and put that same **Spirit** into these seventy elders (Num. 11:17). When **Y'hoshua** raised concerns because two of them were prophesying, **Moshe** said, **"Are you so zealous to protect me? I wish all of Adonai's people were prophets! I wish Adonai would put his Spirit on all of them!"**(Numbers 11:29).

3(2:30) I will show wonders in the sky and on earth - blood, fire, and columns of smoke. ^{4(2:31)} The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai. " ^{5(2:32)} At that time, whoever calls on the name of Adonai will be saved. For in Mount Tziyon and Yerushalayim, there will be those who escape, as Adonai has promised; among the survivors will be those whom Adonai has called. ¹

These are signs that the last days have commenced. In Acts 2, **Kefa** interpreted **Yo'el's** word 'afterwards' as 'the last days' (Acts 2:17). He was indicating to the crowds in **Yerushalayim** that the **Messianic** age had finally arrived, and the pouring out of God's Holy Spirit was the positive sign of it.

In your family discussions, remind everyone of **God's** promise of restoration, as found in **Yo'el** 2:18-32. When faced with issues like financial struggles or strained relationships, take turns sharing examples of how **God** has restored things in your lives. This encourages hope and faith within your family unit. Set aside a time each week to pray together, asking **God** not only to help you with your immediate pains but also to show you how He intends to bring healing and abundance back into your family life, reinforcing your belief in His graciousness.

In our next post, we will continue to explore the prophecy of **Yo'el**.

¹ Yo'el 2:18-3:5 (2:32)