

Week 5 | “Repent, and Wake Up—Joel 1:4-5”

I. GOD’S JUDGEMENT UPON ISRAEL

1. **Joel 1:4** “What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; what the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.”
- B. For the first time in the book, the prophet Joel makes us aware of what’s causing this historical devastation, a devastation that hasn’t been seen in at least 3 generations (*Elders, inhabitants, children*). It’s a massive locust invasion, an invasion that’s destroyed EVERYTHING.
- C. Though you and I don’t shutter when we hear the word locust, if you lived in the Middle East and you heard today there was a Locust invasion coming, you’d leave Church immediately and race home. But why all the fear for a 2 ½ inch long insect that carries no *diseases, doesn’t bite* and *wont attack humans/pets/livestock*?
- D. David Pawson has some thoughts on locust that get us closer acquainted with their terror;
 1. “The Arabs describe locust by using 10 of the larger animals they say are found in the locust; (1) The face of a horse (2) The eyes of an elephant (3) The neck of a bull (4) The horns of a deer (5) The chest of a lion (6) The belly of a scorpion (7) The wings of an eagle (8) The thighs of a camel (9) The feet of an ostrich (10) The tail of a serpent
 2. *When they lay their eggs in the sand, they can lay 5,000 eggs to the square foot, and a locust egg bed will cover dozens of acres and every egg will hatch. They come out first as little hoppers unable to fly, but these little hoppers can cover 10,000 to the square yard, and often times these hoppers will be stretched out for 15 miles, at 10,000 hoppers to the square yard (currently the present day swarms in East Africa are numbered in the billions).*
 3. *When they change, and began to multiply, they will multiply their numbers 100 x’s in one generation, producing in the millions. These locusts will travel about 2,000 miles before they die off, eating around 80 tons of vegetation per-day (13 x’s the weight of a tyrannosaurus rex, or about the weight of a space shuttle).*
 4. *These swarms will travel about 10 MPH, often blocking out the sun, and leaving nothing behind, literally nothing.”*
- E. There’s lots of debate about the variety of species mention in this verse, *or if they’re different forms of locust*, but Joel isn’t giving us a lesson in Entomology (*the study of insects*), he’s letting us know when they roll through, they destroy everything.
- F. Joel’s wanting us to know, not that they WILL eat everything, but that they HAVE EATEN everything,;
 1. **Joel 1:4** “What the chewing locust LEFT, the swarming locust HAS EATEN; what the swarming locust LEFT, the crawling locust HAS EATEN; and what the crawling locust LEFT, the consuming locust HAS EATEN.”
- G. Remember, this happened in Joel’s day with no stimulus checks, with no SBA loans, *no PPP for the farmers*, and *no government bailout moneys*. If you lost those crops, you lost everything, without recovery.

- H. The painful irony of the moment is that the locust are the ones actually doing the will of God.
1. **Deuteronomy 28:15,42** *“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these cruses will come upon you and overtake you...locust shall consume ALL your trees AND THE produce of your land.”*
- I. This is the backside of covenant life, a life with unthinkable blessings IF THE COVENANT IS OBEYED, but it’s coupled along with great consequences IF THE COVENANT IS DISOBEYED. As God punished Israel’s enemies in the Exodus, God’s now punishing Israel in the same fashion.
- J. God’s judgment over people, and nations is slow building, but when it comes, it comes suddenly and destructively;
1. **2nd Peter 2:1-3** *“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves SWIFT destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.”*
 2. **Revelation 1:15; 2:18-23** *“His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace...and to the Angel of the church in Thyatira write, these things says the son of God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass; I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last or more than the first. Nevertheless, I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed, I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts....”*

II. IT’S TIME TO WAKE UP

1. **Joel 1:5** *“Awake, you drunkards, and weep; and wail, all you drinkers of wine; because of the new wine for it has been cut off from your mouth.”*
- B. This judgment, this plague has attacked Jerusalem’s way of life, *for the purpose of waking them up*. Like all of God’s judgments, they are redemptive in nature, given for the purpose of turning a people back to Himself.
- C. The fact that Joel appeals to the drunkards is an indication that they were TOTALLY removed from the situation, as they will be the first people impacted by the devastation.
- D. What these drunkards love is dependent upon the crops, and the fact that Joel’s asking the, if there aware, means that they aren’t aware (*no grapes, no wine*).
- E. I don’t think this passage is so much an indictment against alcohol, as much as it is an indictment to those of us that are intoxicated with the spirit of this age. Both have the same effects; they have a tendency to drown out our personal problems and the crisis around us.

- F. The spirit of this age causes us to become blind, dulled and disconnected. That’s why this prophet, a Jew himself, who’s looking at the crisis firsthand is calling out to those around him to WAKE UP, TAKE NOTE, and RETURN. Joel knows there’s only one way out of this crisis, and it’s once again obeying the covenant, returning to the Lord their God.
- G. One of the greatest gifts God could give His church in this hour is the spirit of sobriety. We, like the nation of Israel need a glass of cold water thrown into our faces to wake us up, to help us get out of slumber.
1. **2nd Timothy 1:7** “For God is not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound (sober) mind.”
 2. **Matthew 24:37-39** “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the son of man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the Ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the son of man be.”
- H. Our danger is that we can end up being those people, even in the Church, living life as if nothing is changing, as if life isn’t changing, as if trouble isn’t on the horizon, as if difficulty isn’t closer than it was before.
- I. Folks in Noah’s day were taking in the sights, living the slow Sunday stroll through life until suddenly the door slammed shut.
1. **Romans 14:11-14** “And do this, knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our Salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, and in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”
- J. Joel’s appeal is, “Awake...and weep...because the wine has been cut off from your mouth.”
- K. The idea is that it’s literally been torn from their hands, and from their mouth. It’s as if the prophet is saying, “Guys, wake up, for that which your resting your head upon, is a volcano about to burst and totally engulf your life in a way that you never intended it to. This beast that you’ve made friends with is about to turn and devour you.”
- L. God deals with sincere but struggling followers of Jesus every differently than rebellious people who aren’t working to get free from their sins, who aren’t working to be loosed from the weights and snares that so easily entangle us (**Heb. 12:1-2**).
- M. We have to be a people who repent, who take serious Jesus’ exhortation to follow Him without the hinderances.
1. What things has God been talking to you about getting free from? What do you need to confess? What sins in your life need to be exposed, repented of and moved away from?