

Readings

Scripture

¹The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel: ²Hear this, you elders; give ear, all inhabitants of the land! Has such a thing happened in your days, or in the days of your fathers? ³Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children to another generation.

⁴What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten. What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten.

⁵Awake, you drunkards, and weep, and wail, all you drinkers of wine, because of the sweet wine, for it is cut off from your mouth. ⁶For a nation has come up against my land, powerful and beyond number; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness. ⁷It has laid waste my vine and splintered my fig tree; it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down; their branches are made white.

⁸Lament like a virgin wearing sackcloth for the bridegroom of her youth. ⁹The grain offering and the drink offering are cut off from the house of the Lord. The priests mourn, the ministers of the Lord. ¹⁰The fields are destroyed, the ground mourns, because the grain is destroyed, the wine dries up, the oil languishes. ...

^{2:12}“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. ¹⁴Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God?

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber.

¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, “Spare your people, O Lord, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

- Joel 1:1-10, 2:12-17 (English Standard Version)

Sermon Outline

THE Day
John 1:1-2:17

Return With All Your Heart
Brad Anderson

The “day of the Lord” is the “today” of his people. (Joel 2:11)

What two realities capture the spiritual dynamics of that day?

A Day of Judgment (Joel 1:2-4, 2:1-2)

- Past
- Present
- Future

A Day of Salvation (Joel 1:19-20, 2:12-13, 17)

- Past
- Present
- Future

Reflection Questions

- What has been the funniest or most embarrassing consequence of your sleeping through an alarm?
- What various groups does Joel address? What event has come to them? How does it affect them?
- What does this say about how faith is born and nurtured? What famous plague in their recital of God's mighty acts would Joel's hearers have surely recalled (See Exodus 10:13-15).
- The joy of this nation was linked to external circumstances. On a scale of 1-10 (1 - never, 10 – always) how often is that true of you?
- Since his people have just experienced a locust plague and ensuing famine, why do you think Joel is dwelling on this theme of the coming “day of the Lord”?
- How does one endure the coming “day of the Lord”? (Look at Joel 2:11, 2:32) What feelings do you have about that day? Are they mixed?