



## **RESTORING THE YEAR(S) OF THE LOCUST!! -- CMP – 11 15 14 - Phil Twente**

*Joel 2:25 "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. Joel 2:26 You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; And My people shall never be put to shame.*

### **Biblical Background:**

- The Book of Joel sums up the life of the nation Israel.
- The people had been plagued by swarms of locusts that had devastated the land. All their crops had been destroyed. Even the bark on the trees had been stripped bare.
- All the energy and effort of the previous year had been eaten up in a matter of just a few weeks.

### **Your Situation:**

- As you look back over the past year or years, maybe you feel like locusts have descended upon you.
- Maybe you put a lot into **a relationship** only to have nothing to show for it now.
- Maybe you gave much of yourself into **your job**, but were passed by for a promotion or maybe you were laid off and lost your job altogether!
- Maybe the creeping, gnawing, crawling, stripping locusts have **left virtually nothing** behind that which you so lovingly planted, to which you so energetically gave yourself.

But as God said to His people in Joel's day, He says to you this day! – **I will restore the years the locust has eaten.** I'll not only give you a fresh start, but will restore to you the years that were lost, the energy that was wasted.

When you feel burned out, disappointed and devastated, **remember this promise: "I will restore the years the locust has eaten."**

**SINCERE REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION - Joel 2:12** *"Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." Joel 2:13 So **rend your heart**, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. Tap into this promise of blessing, there must first be sincere repenting. In OT times, people would often tear their clothes to show their sorrow, but that simply was an outward gesture.*

- Here the LORD says, I want you to be truly broken before Me. I want you to come with fasting, weeping and a broken heart!
- The word, "repentance" is a military term that simply means "about face". When soldier hear that command, they turn around and begin marching in the opposite direction. Repentance means you were once moving one way, but you turn around and move in exactly the opposite direction. (From sin and to the LORD)!
- Repentance begins with confession. "To confess" literally means "to say the same"
- This means that in true confession, I come before the LORD and say the same thing He says about my sin! I don't call it an error, a lapse in judgment or blame it on someone else, I say, "LORD, have mercy on me ! My attitude stinks! This sin is mine!
- Confessing is the beginning, but it's not enough to simply confess our sin. We must turn from it, as well.
- We must say, You sent and allowed the locusts to come into my life in order to show me that I've been wrong. Now, LORD, I humble myself before You and I'm going to march in the opposite direction! - Cf. Penitential Psalms; 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 142

**SOLEMN REGATHERING - Joel 2:15** *Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Joel 2:16 Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room. Joel 2:17a Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your people, O LORD,...."*

- Blow the trumpet! Call the people to gather to seek My face! No excuses, everyone must come! They had thought there was no need to gather together. They could worship by themselves in their own way. – cf. **Heb 10:25** *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...*
- How many times do we hear that the devastation in people's lives has its beginning marked at the point when they stopped assembling with the people of God. They were either angry with someone, disappointed in something, or just too busy to make fellowship a priority!
- People think they can go it alone, but it doesn't work that way. The ones who try to go it alone are vulnerable to getting picked off. Just as the Amalekites would pick off the stragglers during the wilderness march.
- To grow as a believer and progress on this pilgrimage, I need to assemble with brothers and sisters who will sometimes bless me and other times bug me. It's all part of being God's family.

**SPIRITED REJOICING - Joel 2:20** *"But I will remove far from you the northern army, And will drive him away into a barren and desolate land, With his face toward the eastern sea And his back toward the western sea; His stench will come up, And his foul odor will rise, Because he has done monstrous things." Joel 2:21 Fear not, O land; Be glad and rejoice, For the LORD has done marvelous things!*

- As the trumpet sounded, the people were surrounded by the devastated crops and barren vineyards that had been destroyed by the locusts. Yet, what does the Lord say? He says *Be glad and rejoice, For the LORD has done marvelous things!* Because I made a promise to you and I want you to act as though it's already come to pass. That's what faith is. Although there are many ways to please the LORD, not one of them lacks faith as an ingredient. **"Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6)**
- The world says, If I see it, I'll believe it! **The LORD says, Believe it and then you'll see it!**
- **"Rejoice in the Lord always, Again I say rejoice,** Paul would say (**Phil. 4:4**) In other words, I'm going to tell you over and over again to rejoice in the Lord. Believe the promise of the Lord even before you see it worked out because faith is essential to seeing the fullness of God's blessings released.
- If you're saying, **Wow! Beautiful! Thank You, Lord!** As you read **His promises in the Word,** you can be sure **He's going to be so delighted by your faith that blessing you will be His joy!**
- **The Capernaum Centurion – Mat 8:5-10** *Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, [6] saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." [7] And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." [8] The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. [9] For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." [10] When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!*

**SUMMARY: For God's Promise - Joel 2:25** *"So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten,*

**1. Confess & Repent! 2. Gather with the body of Christ! 3. Rejoice always with expectancy!**