

Locusts

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[0 : 0 0] You're alright. How are we doing today? Great. Good. Let's go to the Lord and pray. Father God, Lord, we come to you on bended knee.

We come to you with hearts open to hear the words that you want to speak. Hear the things you want to teach us. Hear how you love us. Hear how you're going to take all those terrible things that are planned and turn them into wonderful things for your goodness.

For your glory. Because we know that it is through you and only through you we'll have salvation. So Lord, I'm going to go sit down and I'm going to let you be the one speaking.

I'm going to sit in the back and just take in all that you have to say. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen. So we're going to talk about some locusts today.

To start with. But I want to tell you the story. so Tame and I owned this house when we lived in Omaha and it was the first house we ever owned and it was a Victorian style house so it was like we found after we had moved in up in the attic there was the lunch from one of the workers that built the house still there and there was a newspaper, it was wrapped in the newspaper and it was from like 1912 so and there was like an old banana and things like that wrapped in the newspaper so that's just kind of give you an idea so it had four stories so it had a basement and it was one of them basements that had a coal chute so you know how old the basement was then and what kind of the basement looked like because you know it was like that thin, thin thin cement and there was like a shelf all the way around it and then on the first floor you had a dining room and a kitchen and you had a den and we turned the den into a bedroom from one of the kids

[2 : 0 6] TJ and of course a living room and then on the second floor you had three bedrooms and a bathroom there was a bathroom downstairs too then there was an attic and like a real attic like one you walked upstairs to go into you didn't have to crawl up a ladder and then there was in the front there was a they called it a sunroom but it was a balcony that overlooked the front like when you walked in the front door it was over top and we had the most perfect lawn there the front lawn was perfect it was turf type fescue which is kind of a cool season grass that it's it's not like the K31 fescue you'll see in fields they've narrowed it down so it's kind of a really great grass it really is it's awesome grass it's it doesn't deal with the things that bluegrass deals with because I call centipede grass which we have here centiweed as I call it it's like it's like the the bluegrass of the south because bluegrass is a finicky grass everything has to be just perfect for it but with fescue because there's a lot of fescue here it's just it was just the perfect lawn then one day

I woke up and the entire lawn was dead and why army worms because army worms will come in and the one there's only two things that'll kill fescue really army worms and grubs as far as insect wise now you can get disease they get a lot of fungus here but and I'm telling you it from we went from having the perfect lawn to having a brown lawn the entire lawn because they have army worms they eat it all the way down to the crown and when they eat the crown it's dead nothing you can do if the crown of the plant dies the plant's gonna die and I'll tell you it was the most terrible looking lawn then you could imagine and the only way to fix it is to reseed it or reside it and it was just terrible I mean it was easy to cut and it was beautiful and then now it's nothing and I think that's what the Israelites saw when the locust came they had all their wheat their corn and their barley and all their fig trees and everything else was all green and luscious because God provided what they needed and then they went into a drought and they went from going into the drought they had the locust go and the locust just took it all away killed it all and you might want to think were the Israelites sinning against God when they did this were they following his word or were they following the word of other gods you know the people that lived around them so we're gonna look at the first set of verses

Mark can you switch there we go this is Joel chapter 1 verses 1 through 4 and it says this is the Lord's message that came from Joel the son of Bethel and by the way so you know I know it said in the video I played that nobody knows when it was written and they don't they're not sure when it was written and the word Joel in Hebrew almost means awesome God I can't remember the exact words they used but the word Joel because they if you divided it up the J-O and the L because L means God and the Joe is like Lava or Yava I can't think of how to pronounce it off the top of my head but just something to think about so locust plague foreshadowed the day of the Lord so that's after the day of the Lord we're coming up on listen to this you elders pay attention all inhabitants of the land has anything like this ever happened in your whole life or in the lifetime of your ancestors tell your children about it have your children tell their children and their children the following generation kind of like you know that's how we do things we tell our children about things and they tell their kids and so on and so on and so on right and that's what Joel is saying right here is that we need to make sure we tell people and it says what the gazim locust left the arabeth locust consumed what the arabeth locust left the yeleg locust consumed and what the yeleg locust left the hazel locust consumed and so I was kind of wondering what all these different locusts were because there's four different varieties of locusts here he's talking about that came in and destroyed everything

Mark go to the next slide would you so a gazim locust or gazim is a hebrew word in the bible most notably in the book of Joel referring to a specific type locust often translucent as a palmerworm or caterpillar so that first one is kind of like a caterpillar okay then the hazel locust refers to a stage in a locust destructive life cycle and its name connects to the hebrew word for something near completion so I'm thinking we have a family of locusts okay so you got the caterpillar which is like maybe the first stage before they turn into actual locusts or turn into caterpillars and then the next stage is the one that came along and they're nearing perfection but they're the next stage of the caterpillar and then it says unlike the smaller velig hopper or the massive mature female the hazel locust is characterized by its ability to consume remaining tender vegetation and even attack tree branches as it grows larger and more destructive so there's three or four different stages like one's a mature female so the next stage was a mature female and then the next stage was the big you know the guy you know the one that was like in charge of everything or thinks he is so so it's like a family of locusts but it's an entire swarm of them go to the next one

Mark so as we look at five through seven it says wake up you drunkards and weep wail all you wine drinkers because the sweet wine has been taken away from you see there the entire grapes are gone that's what this is saying what they drank for wine what they drank all the grapes they would use for the many things is gone now that's one of the things he's also talking to those that are drunkards and care more about the taste of wine than they do following the Lord for a nation has invaded my land mighty and without number their teeth are like lion's teeth they have the fangs of a lioness they have destroyed my vines they have turned my fig trees into mere splinters they have completely stripped off the bark and thrown it aside the twigs are stripped bare and you know

[10:04] God kind of refers to Israelites as his vine if we were to look in John in the New Testament he talks about the vine a lot it's important that we understand that this has all happened because we think this all happened because God decided to punish Israel for something that they did for not following his words but there's some good coming go to the next one I want to show y'all what this picture I found this was in the Rocky Mountains in 1875 but you see that swarm of locusts imagine if you saw that you'd look out your window and you'd see oh my God what's happening because it's not like they can go to the grocery store and buy food back then could they everything was in the fields all of it and it all disappeared overnight just like those army worms that came and attacked my lawn they got rid of my lawn overnight so imagine if you looked out into your field and everything out there was gone what would happen to your sheep what would happen to your cows how would you feed your children because you know today if our children are going hungry there's always ways to get them food back then

I don't know how they did it do you but you know the nice thing is God always offers a way out no matter what's going on God offers a way out so go to the next set of verses Mark so now we see how God is trying to tell us we need to repent and maybe not us but them but maybe us too think of our world mentioned to Glenn and John the other day yesterday so I was listening to Sirius Radio on the way in and a song came on the radio and the song was My Teeter Totter song written in the 60s okay I don't know how many of you older people know the song I'm talking about it's a really neat song the entire song is about this guy being on a teeter totter and using a teeter totter you know how simple is that how you know not inappropriate is that now if you were to turn on the radio and listen to modern music like say pop music or country music or whatever kind you listen to

I promise you at least one out of every two songs is going to be about sex or going to be about partying or drinking or shooting somebody or something like that you see the difference there and say 50 years we've gone from being simple and maybe loving to caring more about those things that aren't do you think God wants us to care about the things that aren't granted God created sex for a husband and wife and granted God created a whole one you know being happy and being joyous in a godly manner he didn't create it for us to turn it into something terrible and that's what the music has become and I'm auditioning music I love music

I listen to especially 60s and 70s rock and roll all the time because to me that's when it was much much better you agree don't you Roger and the music wasn't as explicit as it is today but the and so we have fallen away from God just like the Israelites were falling away from God when they were trying to chase after the gods of these other people that lived around them because God told them look as long as you do this I will grant you all kinds of wonderful things but if you do this I will punish you so as we begin this next set of verses it says wail like a young virgin clothed in sackcloth lamenting the death of her husband to be no one brings grain offerings or drink offerings to the temple of the

Lord anymore so the priests those who serve the Lord are in mourning the crops of the fields have been destroyed the ground is in mourning because the grain has perished the fresh wine has dried up the olive oil languishes of the field have dried up indeed the joy of the people has dried up get dressed and lament you priests wail you who minister at the altar come spend the night in sackcloth the servants of my God because no one brings grain offerings or drink offerings to the temple of your God anymore that's through 13 he's telling the people get on your knees he's telling the priest get on your knees and wail lament repent of what you've done that's what he's telling them to do and it's coming from

[16 : 27] God it's not Joel it's coming from God God says this has all happened this is what you need to do go to the next one Mark announce a holy fast now he's giving specific orders to the priest reclaim a sacred!

gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the temple of how awful the day will be for the day of the Lord is near there's that that phrase the day of the Lord keep that in mind as we go over Joel not just today but every Sunday we go over it will come as destruction from the divine destroyer our food has been cut off right before our eyes there is no longer any joy or gladness in the temple of our God the grains of seed have shriveled beneath their shovels storehouses have been decimated and granaries have been torn down because the grain has dried up listen to the cattle grown go to the next one Mark the herds of livestock wander around in confusion because they have no pasture even the flocks of sheep are suffering to you oh Lord I call out for help for fire has burned up the pastures of the wilderness flames has raised all the trees and the fields even the wild animals cry out to you for the river beds have dried up fire has destroyed the pastures of the wilderness all of this is what the priests have to do they have to get us for the people to get on their knees repent and wail to

God and call out to God and ask God for forgiveness ask God to help them through this it's important that we understand what happens next Mark go to the next one so if we look in Romans chapter 10 verses 9 13 it says because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved for with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation for the scripture says everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame but there is no distinction between the Jews and the Greeks for the same Lord is

Lord of all who richly blesses all who call on him remember they said we're going to call on the Lord for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved and isn't that what the priests were told to do to get the people to call on the Lord and we see in Romans which was hundreds of years later where when they wrote this they said if you call on the name of the Lord you will be saved and that's what Joel was trying to get the priests to do to call on the name of the Lord so that the people would be saved the same way we need to call on the name of the Lord and ask God to forgive us ask God to put us where he wants us to be you know typically when churches have men's breakfast it's only the men from that church that attend very seldom do you ever hear of an entire community of men attending there is at least when we have men's breakfast here that first

Saturday at least four to eight churches of men that attend think about that that means that God's work is at work in this community and there's no racial difference there's none there's all different kinds of races and people that are coming together for this men's breakfast because God is the one that's making it happen not us God I have a friend that in Fayetteville he used to invite me to his men's breakfast they had theirs the first Saturday of the month too and it was always just men from their church whenever you hear about it and I'll talk to people about it as I go about my daily live and they'll say yeah it's only men from our church that means that God's trying to do something here in this community we're not but

[21 : 39] God is but we can be his! instrument so it's important that we as believers in Christ call out to God and ask him to forgive us and ask him to fill us and make us his hands and feet make us the ones that reach out into the community like our friend over there who's sitting out there who comes and sees us on Sundays but he lives in Missouri it's good to see you here brother that's what I mean we just have to continue to be a door open to letting God lead us let's go to the Lord in prayer Father God thank you for this time thank you for the fellowship thank you for loving us the way you are thank you for your message

Lord just continue to love us and use us as you do Lord I just can't thank you enough for the way you use me I can't thank you enough the way you use the men of this church and the women of this church to reach out to the community to love one another because I know it all comes from you and not from us I pray this in the name of Jesus Amen